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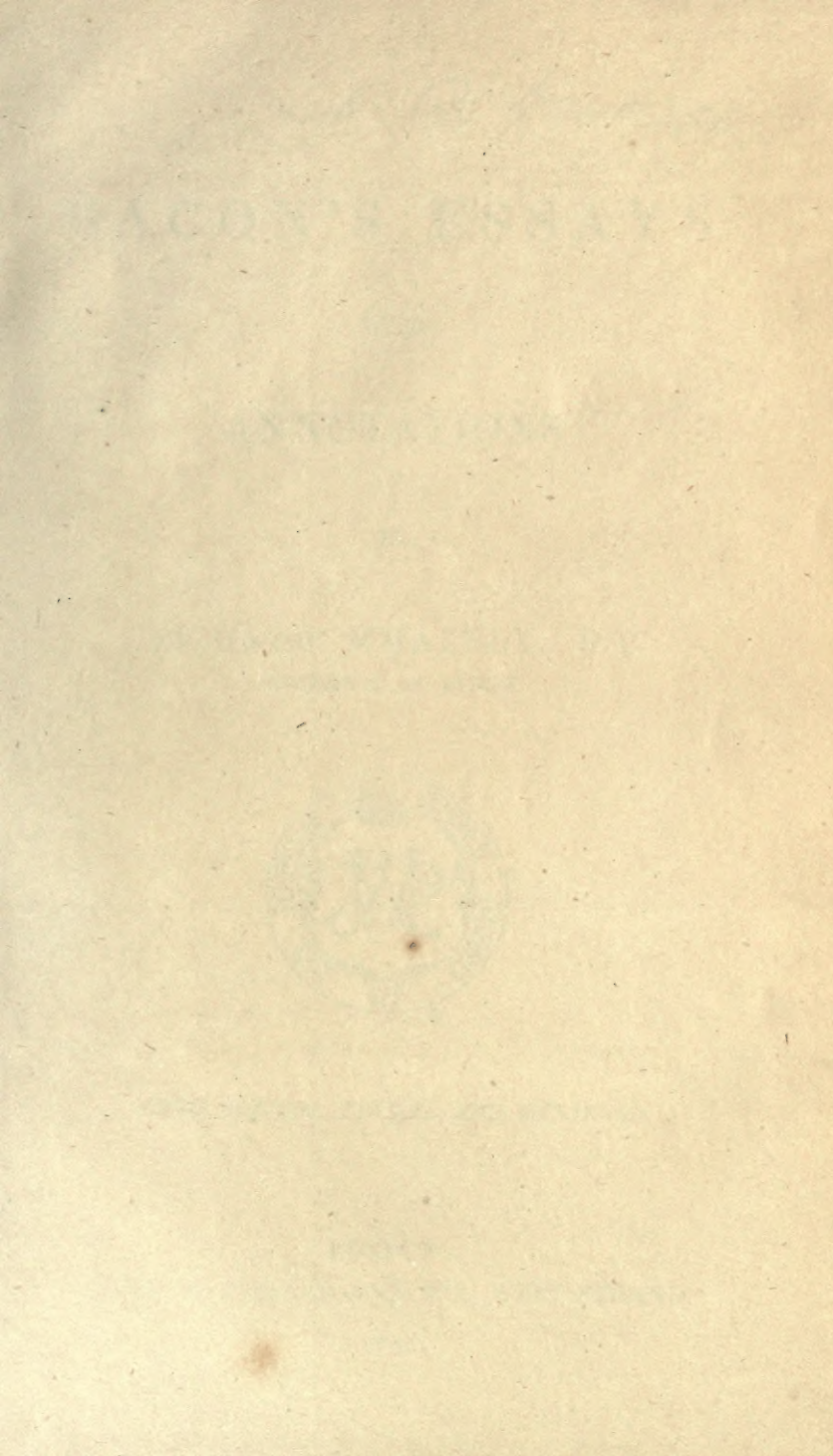
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L. R. Whately
1861.

BACON'S ESSAYS:

WITH

ANNOTATIONS

BY

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PREFACE.

HAVING been accustomed to write down, from time to time, such observations as occurred to me on several of Bacon's Essays, and also to make references to passages in various books which relate to the same subjects, I have been induced to lay the whole before the Public in an Edition of these Essays. And in this I have availed myself of the assistance of a friend, who, besides offering several valuable suggestions, kindly undertook the task of revising and arranging the loose notes I had written down, and adding, in foot-notes, explanations of obsolete words and phrases. These notes are calculated, I think, to throw light on the language not only of Bacon's Essays, but also of our Authorized Version of the Scriptures, which belongs to the same Age. There are, in that language, besides some few words that are now wholly obsolete, many times more (as is remarked in the 'Annotations' on Essay XXIV.) which are now as commonly in use as ever, but with a change in their *meaning*, which makes them far more likely to mislead than those quite obsolete.¹

In order to guard against the imputation of presumption in venturing to make additions to what Bacon has said on several subjects, it is necessary to call attention to the circumstance that the word ESSAY has been considerably changed in its application since the days of Bacon. By an *Essay* was originally meant—according to the obvious and natural sense of the word—a slight sketch, to be filled up by the reader; brief hints, designed to be followed out; loose thoughts on some

¹ There is a very useful little work by the Rev. Mr. Booker, a Vocabulary of the Obsolete Words and Phrases in our Version. It is a manual which no reader of the Bible ought to be without.

subjects, thrown out without much regularity, but sufficient to suggest further inquiries and reflections. Any more elaborate, regular, and finished composition, such as, in our days, often bears the title of an Essay, our ancestors called a *treatise*, *tractate*, *dissertation*, or *discourse*. But the more unpretending title of 'Essay' has in great measure superseded those others which were formerly in use, and more strictly appropriate.

I have adverted to this circumstance, because it ought to be remembered that an Essay, in the original and strict sense of the word,—an Essay such as Bacon's, and also Montaigne's,—was designed to be suggestive of further remarks and reflections, and, in short, to *set the reader a-thinking* on the subject. It consisted of observations loosely thrown out, as in conversation; and inviting, as in conversation, the observations of others on the subject. With an Essay, in the modern sense of the word, it is not so. If the reader of what was designed to be a regular and complete treatise on some subject (and which would have been *so entitled* by our forefathers) makes additional remarks on that subject, he may be understood to imply that there is a deficiency and imperfection—a something *wanting*—in the work before him; whereas, to suggest such further remarks—to give outlines that the reader shall fill up for himself—is the very object of an Essay, properly so called—such as those of Bacon. A commentary to explain or correct, few writings need less: but they admit of, and call for, expansion and development. They are gold-ingots, not needing to be gilt or polished, but requiring to be hammered out in order to display their full value.

He is, throughout, and especially in his Essays, one of the most suggestive authors that ever wrote. And it is remarkable that, compressed and pithy as the Essays are, and consisting chiefly of brief hints, he has elsewhere condensed into a still smaller compass the matter of most of them. In his *Rhetoric* he has drawn up what he calls 'Antitheta,' or common-places, 'locos,' i.e. *pros and cons*,—opposite sentiments and reasons, on

various points, most of them the same that are discussed in the Essays. It is a compendious and clear mode of bringing before the mind the most important points in any question, to place in parallel columns, as Bacon has done, whatever can be plausibly urged, fairly, or unfairly, on opposite sides; and then you are in the condition of a judge who has to decide some cause after having heard all the pleadings. I have accordingly appended to most of the Essays some of Bacon's 'Antitheta' on the same subjects.

Several of these 'Antitheta' were either adopted by Bacon from proverbial use, or have (through him) become Proverbs.¹ And, accordingly, I prefixed a brief remark (which I here insert) to the selection from Bacon's 'Antitheta' appended to the *Elements of Rhetoric*. For, all the writers on the subject that I have met with (several of them learned, ingenious, and entertaining) have almost entirely overlooked what appears to me the real character, and proper office, of *Proverbs*.

'Considering that Proverbs have been current in all ages and countries, it is a curious circumstance that so much difference of opinion should exist as to the utility, and as to the design of them. Some are accustomed to speak as if Proverbs contained a sort of concentrated essence of the wisdom of all Ages, which will enable any one to judge and act aright on every emergency. Others, on the contrary, represent them as fit only to furnish occasionally a motto for a book, a theme for a school-boy's exercise, or a copy for children learning to write.

'To me, both these opinions appear erroneous.

'That Proverbs are not generally regarded, by those who use

¹ There is appended to Prof. Sullivan's *Spelling-book superseded*, a collection (which is also published separate) of PROVERBS for Copy-lines, with short explanations annexed, for the use of young people. As a child can hardly fail to learn by heart, without effort or design, words which he has written, over and over, as an exercise in penmanship, if these words contain something worth remembering, this is so much clear gain.

them, as, necessarily, propositions of universal and acknowledged truth, like mathematical axioms, is plain from the circumstance that many of those most in use are—like these common-places of Bacon—*opposed* to each other; as *e.g.* ‘Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves;’ to ‘Be not penny-wise and pound-foolish;’ and again, ‘The more haste, the worse speed;’ or, ‘Wait awhile, that we may make an end the sooner;’ to ‘Take Time by the forelock,’ or ‘Time and tide for no man bide,’ &c.

‘It seems, I think, to be practically understood, that a Proverb is merely a *compendious expression* of some principle, which will usually be, in different cases, and with or without certain modifications, true or false, applicable or inapplicable. When then a Proverb is introduced, the speaker usually employs it as a *Major-premise*, and is understood to imply, as a *Minor*, that the principle thus referred to is *applicable* in the existing case. And what is gained by the employment of the Proverb, is, that his judgment, and his reason for it, are conveyed—through the use of a *well-known* form of expression, clearly, and at the same time in an incomparably *shorter space*, than if he had had to explain his meaning in expressions framed for the occasion. And the brevity thus obtained is often still further increased by suppressing the full statement even of the very Proverb itself, if a very common one, and merely *alluding* to it in a word or two.

‘Proverbs accordingly are somewhat analogous to those medical Formulas which, being in frequent use, are kept ready-made-up in the chemists’ shops, and which often save the framing of a distinct Prescription.

‘And the usefulness of this brevity will not be thought, by any one well conversant with Reasoning, to consist merely in the saving of breath, paper, or time. Brevity, when it does *not* cause obscurity, conduces much to the *opposite* effect, and causes the meaning to be far *more* clearly apprehended than it would have been in a longer expression. More than half the cases, probably, in which men either misapprehend what is said,

or confuse one question with another, or are misled by any fallacy, are traceable in great measure to a want of sufficient *conciseness* of expression.'

Perhaps it may be thought by some to be a superfluous task to say anything at all concerning a work which has been in most people's hands for about two centuries and a-half, and has, in that time, rather gained than lost in popularity. But there are some qualities in Bacon's writings to which it is important to direct, from time to time, especial attention, on account of a tendency often showing itself, and not least at the present day, to regard with excessive admiration writers of a completely opposite character; those of a mystical, dim, half-intelligible kind of affected grandeur.¹

'It is well known what a reproach to our climate is the prevalence of fogs, and how much more of risk and of inconvenience results from that mixture of light and obscurity than from the darkness of night. But let any one imagine to himself, if he can, a mist so resplendent with gay prismatic colours, that men should forget its inconveniences in their admiration of its beauty, and that a kind of nebular taste should prevail, for preferring that gorgeous dimness to vulgar daylight; nothing short of this could afford a parallel to the mischief done to the public mind by some late writers both in England and America;—a sort of 'Children of the Mist,' who bring forward their speculations—often very silly, and not seldom very mischievous—under cover of the twilight. They have accustomed their disciples to admire as a style sublimely philosophical, what may best be described as a certain haze of words imperfectly understood, through which some seemingly original ideas, scarcely distinguishable in their outlines, *loom*, as it were, on the view, in a kind of dusky magnificence, that greatly exaggerates their real dimensions.'

¹ The passages that follow are chiefly extracted from No. 29 of the *Cautions for the Times*; of which I may be permitted to say,—as it was not written by myself—that a more admirable composition, both in matter and style, I never met with.

In the October number of the *Edinburgh Review*, 1851 (p. 513), the reviewer, though evidently disposed to regard with some favour a style of dim and mystical sublimity, remarks, that ‘a strange notion, which many have adopted of late years, is that a poem cannot be profound unless it is, in whole or in part, obscure; the people like their prophets to foam and speak riddles.’

But the reviewer need not have confined his remark to poetry; a similar taste prevails in reference to prose writers also. ‘I have ventured,’ says the late Bishop Copleston (in a letter published in the Memoir of him by his nephew), ‘to give the whole class the appellation of the *‘magic-lanthorn school,’* for, their writings have the startling effect of that toy; children delight in it, and grown people soon get tired of it.’

The passages here subjoined, from modern works in some repute, may serve as specimens (and a multitude of such might have been added) of the kind of style alluded to:—

‘In truth, then, the idea (call it that of day or that of night) is threefold, not twofold:—day, night, and their relation. Day is the thesis, night the antithesis, their relation the mesothesis of the triad,—for triad it is, and not a mere pair or duad, after all. It is the same with all the other couples cited above, and with all couples, for every idea is a trinitarian. Positive pole, negative one, and that middle term wherein they are made one; sun, planet, their relation; solar atom, planetary one, their conjunction, and so forth. The term of relation betwixt the opposites in these ideal pairs is sometimes called the point of indifference, the mesoteric point, the mid-point. This mid-point is to be seen standing betwixt its right and left fellow-elements in every dictionary: for example, men, man, women; or adjectively, male, human, female. ‘So God created man in His own image: in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.’’

‘Now, this threefold constitution of ideas is universal. As all things seem to go in pairs to sense, and to the understand-

ing, so all are seen in threes by reason. This law of antinomy is no limited, no planetary law, nor yet peculiarly human; it is cosmical, all-embracing, ideal, divine. Not only is it impossible for man to think beauty without simultaneously thinking deformity and their point of indifference, justice without injustice and theirs, unity without multiplicity and theirs, but those several theses (beauty, justice, unity, namely) cannot be thought without these their antitheses, and without the respective middle terms of the pairs. As the eye of common-sense cannot have an inside without an outside, nor a solar orb without a planetary orbicle (inasmuch as it ceases to be solar the instant it is stript of its planet), so the eye of reason cannot see an inside without seeing an outside, and also their connexion as the inside and the outside of one and the same thing, nor a sun without his planet and their synthesis in a solar system. In short, three-in-one is the law of all thought and of all things. Nothing has been created, nothing can be thought, except upon the principle of three-in-one. Three-in-one is the deepest-lying cypher of the universe.¹

Again: 'The 'relativity' of human knowledge, *i.e.*, the metaphysical limitation of it, implies, we are told, the relation of a subject knowing to an object known. And what is known must be *qualitatively* known, inasmuch as we must conceive every object of which we are conscious, in the relation of a quality depending upon a substance. Moreover, this qualitatively known object must be *protended*, or conceived as existing in time, and *extended*, or regarded as existing in space; while its qualities are *intensive*, or conceivable under degree. The thinkable, even when compelled by analysis to make the nearest approach that is possible to a negation of intelligibility, thus implies *phenomena objectified by thought, and conceived to exist in space and time*. With the help of these data, may we not

¹ This must have been in the mind of the poet who wrote—

'So, down thy hill, romantic Ashbourne, glistens
The Derby Dilly, carrying three insides.'

discover and define the highest law of intelligence, and thus place the key-stone in the metaphysic arch?’

‘If thou hast any tidings’ (says Falstaff to Ancient Pistol) ‘prithee deliver them like a man of this world.’

Again: ‘Thus to the ancient, well-known logic, which we might call the logic of identity, and which has for its axiom, *‘A thing can never be the contrary of that which it is,’* Hegel opposes his own logic, according to which *‘everything is at once that which it is, and the contrary of that which it is.’* By means of this he advances *a priori*; he proposes a *thesis*, from which he draws a new *synthesis*, not directly (which might be impossible), but indirectly, by means of an *antithesis*.’

Again: ‘It [Religion] is a mountain air; it is the embalmer of the world. It is myrrh, and storax, and chlorine, and rosemary. It makes the sky and the hills sublime; and the silent song of the stars is it. . . . Always the seer is a sayer. Somehow his dream is told, somehow he publishes it with solemn joy, sometimes with pencil on canvas, sometimes with chisel on stone; sometimes in towers and aisles of granite, his soul’s worship is builded. . . . Man is the wonder-maker. He is seen amid miracles. The stationariness of religion; the assumption that the age of inspiration is past, that the Bible is closed; the fear of degrading the character of Jesus by representing him as a man, indicate with sufficient clearness the falsehood of our theology. It is the office of a true teacher to show us that God is, not was—that He speaketh, not spoke. The true Christianity—a faith like Christ’s in the infinitude of Man—is lost. None believeth in the soul of Man, but only in some man or person old and departed! In how many churches, and by how many prophets, tell me, is Man made sensible that he is an infinite soul; that the earth and heavens are passing into his mind; and that he is drinking for ever the soul of God!’

‘The very word Miracle, as pronounced by christian Churches, gives a false impression; it is a monster; it is not one with the

blowing clover and the falling rain. . . . Man's life is a miracle, and all that man doth. . . . A true conversion, a true Christ, is now, as always, to be made by the reception of beautiful sentiments. . . . The gift of God to the soul is not a vaunting, overpowering, excluding sanctity, but a sweet natural goodness like thine and mine, and that thus invites thine and mine to be, and to grow.'¹

Now, without presuming to insinuate that such passages as these convey no distinct meaning to *any* reader, or to the writer, it may safely be maintained that to above ninety-nine hundredths—including, probably, many who admire them as profoundly wise—they are very dimly, if at all, intelligible. If the writers of them were called on to explain their meaning, as Mr. Bayes is, in *The Rehearsal*, they might perhaps confess as frankly as he does, that the object was merely 'to elevate and surprise.' Some knowledge of a portion of human nature was certainly possessed by that teacher of Rhetoric mentioned by Quintilian, whose constant admonition to his pupils was [σκοτισσον] 'darken, darken!' as the readiest mode of gaining admiration.

One may often hear some writers of the 'magic-lantern school' spoken of as possessing wonderful *power*, even by those who regret that this power is not better employed. 'It is pity,' we sometimes hear it said, 'that such and such an author does not express in simple, intelligible, unaffected English such admirable matter as his.' They little think that it is the strangeness and obscurity of the style that make the power

¹ It is worth observing that this writer, as well as very many others of the same stamp, professes to be a believer in what he chuses to call *Christianity*; and would, of course, not scruple to take the oath (so strenuously maintained by some, as a safeguard to the christian religion) 'on the true faith of a Christian,' though he is further removed from what is commonly meant by 'Christianity,' than a Jew or a Mussulman. And it should be remembered that this case is far different from that (with which it is sometimes confounded) of hypocritical profession. He who uses the word 'Christian' *avowedly* in a sense quite different from the established one, is to be censured indeed for an unwarrantable abuse of language, but is not guilty of *deception*.

displayed seem far greater than it is ; and that much of what they now admire as originality and profound wisdom, would appear, if translated into common language, to be mere common-place matter. Many a work of this description may remind one of the supposed ancient shield which had been found by the antiquary Martinus Scriblerus, and which he highly prized, incrustated as it was with venerable rust. He mused on the splendid appearance it must have had in its bright newness ; till, one day, an over-sedulous house-maid having scoured off the rust, it turned out to be merely an old pot-lid.

¹ ' It is chiefly in such foggy forms that the metaphysics and theology of Germany, for instance, are exercising a greater influence every day on popular literature. It has been zealously instilled into the minds of many, that Germany has something far more profound to supply than anything hitherto extant in our native literature ; though what that profound something is, seems not to be well understood by its admirers. They are, most of them, willing to take it for granted, with an implicit faith, that what seems such *hard* thinking, must be very accurate and original thinking also. What is abstruse and recondite they suppose must be abstruse and recondite wisdom ; though, perhaps, it is what, if stated in plain English, they would throw aside as partly trifling truisms, and partly stark folly.

' It is a remark which I have heard highly applauded, that a *clear* idea is generally a *little* idea ; for there are not a few persons who estimate the depth of thought as an unskilful eye would estimate the depth of water. Muddy water is apt to be supposed to be deeper than it is, because you cannot see to the bottom ; very clear water, on the contrary, will always seem less deep than it is, both from the well-known law of refraction, and also because it is so thoroughly penetrated by the sight. Men fancy that an idea must have been always obvious to every one, when they find it so plainly presented to the mind that every one can easily take it in. An explanation that is

¹ This passage is from the *Cautions for the Times*, No. 29.

perfectly clear, satisfactory, and simple, often causes the unreflecting to forget that they had needed any explanation at all. And truths that are, in practice, frequently overlooked, they will deride as 'vapid truisms' if very *plainly* set forth, and will wonder that any one should think it worth while to notice them.'

Accordingly, if there should be two treatises on some science, one of them twice as long as the other, but containing nothing of much importance that is not to be found in the other (except some positions that are decidedly untenable), but in a style much more diffuse, and less simple and perspicuous, with a tone of lofty pretension, and scornful arrogance, many persons will consider this latter as far the more profound and philosophical work, and the other as containing merely 'beggarly elements,' fit only for the vulgar.

Hence it is that some Writers appear to have much *more*, and others, much *less*, originality than they really have. A man who with a certain amount of ability, has a larger amount of self-conceit, and a still greater craving for admiration, will often acquire a kind of trick of dressing up in a new and striking and paradoxical form, much that has in it little or nothing of real novelty. And if he also throws out dark hints, in a boastful style, of what wonderful matters he *could* produce besides, he will commonly pass for a Writer of great originality. Those, again, of an opposite character, wishing more to convey instruction than to excite admiration, will endeavour, and often with success, to connect what is new with what is long established and well-known, so exactly and so neatly, that the *suture*, as it were, will be imperceptible, and the readers will so easily and clearly understand what is said, that they will fancy they knew it before, and will consider such Authors as sound, indeed, and clear, but quite destitute of originality, and not at all profound.

Each kind of writing has its recommendations. Each will obtain, if there be a considerable amount of ability, some degree

of popularity : but of *immediate* popularity, far the larger share will be obtained by a style of boastful pretension, and apparent originality, because it will be admired by that class of persons who are the more numerous. But the other will strike deeper root, and will produce a more powerful, a more beneficial, and a more lasting impression.

‘Now, Bacon is a striking instance of a genius who could think so profoundly, and at the same time so clearly, that an ordinary man understands readily some of his wisest sayings, and, perhaps, thinks them so self-evident as hardly to need mention. But, on re-consideration and repeated meditation, you perceive more and more what extensive and important application one of his maxims will have, and how often it has been overlooked : and on returning to it again and again, fresh views of its importance will continually open on you. One of his sayings will be like some of the heavenly bodies that are visible to the naked eye, but in which you see continually more and more, the better the telescope you apply to them.

‘The ‘dark sayings,’ on the contrary, of some admired writers, may be compared to a fog-bank at sea, which the navigator at first glance takes for a chain of majestic mountains, but which, when approached closely, or when viewed through a good glass, proves to be a mere mass of unsubstantial vapours.’

A large proportion of Bacon’s works has been in great measure superseded, chiefly through the influence exerted by those works themselves ; for, the more satisfactory and effectual is the refutation of some prevailing errors, and the establishment of some philosophical principles that had been overlooked, the less need is there to resort, for popular use, to the arguments by which this has been effected. They are like the trenches and batteries by which a besieged town has been assailed, and which are abandoned as soon as the capture has been accomplished.

‘I have been labouring,’ says some writer who had been engaged in a task of this kind (and Bacon might have said the

same)—‘I have been labouring to render myself useless.’ Great part, accordingly, of what were the most important of Bacon’s works are now resorted to chiefly as a matter of curious and interesting speculation to the studious few, while the effect of them is practically felt by many who never read, or perhaps even heard of them.

But his Essays retain their popularity, as relating chiefly to the concerns of every-day life, and which, as he himself expresses it, ‘come home to men’s business and bosoms.’

‘In the Pure and in the Physical Sciences,’ says an able writer in the *Edinburgh Review*,¹ ‘each generation inherits the conquests made by its predecessors. No mathematician has to redemonstrate the problems of Euclid; no physiologist has to sustain a controversy as to the circulation of the blood; no astronomer is met by a denial of the principle of gravitation. But in the Moral Sciences the ground seems never to be incontestibly won; and this is peculiarly the case with respect to the sciences which are subsidiary to the arts of administration and legislation. Opinions prevail, and are acted on. The evils which appear to result from their practical application lead to inquiry. Their erroneousness is proved by philosophers, is acknowledged by the educated Public, and at length is admitted even by statesmen. The policy founded on the refuted error is relaxed, and the evils which it inflicted, so far as they are capable of remedy, are removed or mitigated. After a time, new theorists arise, who are seduced or impelled by some moral or intellectual defect or error to reassert the exploded doctrine. They have become entangled by some logical fallacy, or deceived by some inaccurate or incomplete assumption of facts, or think that they see the means of acquiring reputation, or of promoting their interests, or of gratifying their political or their private resentments, by attacking the altered policy. All popular errors are plausible; indeed, if they were not so, they would not be popular. The plausibility

¹ See *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1843, No. 157.

to which the revived doctrine owed its original currency, makes it acceptable to those to whom the subject is new ; and even among those to whom it is familiar, probably ninety-nine out of every hundred are accustomed to take their opinions on such matters on trust. They hear with surprise that what they supposed to be settled is questioned, and often avoid the trouble of inquiring by endeavouring to believe that the truth is not to be ascertained. And thus the cause has again to be pleaded, before judges, some of whom are prejudiced, and others will not readily attend to reasoning founded on premises which they think unsusceptible of proof.'

To treat fully of the design and character of Bacon's greater works, and of the mistakes—which are not few or unimportant—that prevail respecting them, would be altogether unsuited to this Work. But it may be worth while to introduce two brief remarks on that subject.

(1.) The prevailing fault among philosophers in Bacon's time and long before, was hasty, careless, and scanty observation, and the want of copious and patient experiment. On supposed facts not carefully ascertained, and often on mere baseless conjecture, they proceeded to reason, often very closely and ingeniously; forgetting that no architectural skill in a superstructure will give it greater firmness than the foundation on which it rests; and thus they of course failed of arriving at true conclusions; for, the most accurate reasoning is of no avail, if you have not well-established facts and principles to start from.

Bacon laboured zealously and powerfully to recall philosophers from the study of fanciful systems, based on crude conjectures, or on imperfect knowledge, to the careful and judicious investigation, or, as he called it, 'interrogation' and 'interpretation of nature;' the collecting and properly arranging of well-ascertained facts. And the maxims which he laid down and enforced for the conduct of philosophical inquiry, are universally admitted

to have at least greatly contributed to the vast progress which physical science has been making since his time.

But though Bacon dwelt on the importance of setting out from an accurate knowledge of facts, and on the absurdity of attempting to substitute the reasoning-process for an investigation of nature, it would be a great mistake to imagine that he meant to disparage the reasoning-process, or to substitute for skill and correctness in that, a mere accumulated knowledge of a multitude of facts. And any one would be far indeed from being a follower of Bacon, who should despise logical accuracy, and trust to what is often called *experience*; meaning, by that, an extensive but crude and undigested observation. For, as books, though indispensably necessary for a student, are of no use to one who has not learned to read, though he distinctly sees black marks on white paper, so is all experience and acquaintance with facts, unprofitable to one whose mind has not been trained to read rightly the volume of nature, and of human transactions, spread before him.

When complaints are made—often not altogether without reason—of the prevailing ignorance of facts, on such or such subjects, it will often be found that the parties censured, though possessing less knowledge than is desirable, yet possess more than they know what to do with. Their deficiency in arranging and applying their knowledge, in combining facts, and correctly deducing, and rightly employing, general principles, will be perhaps greater than their ignorance of facts. Now, to attempt remedying this defect by imparting to them additional knowledge,—to confer the advantage of wider experience on those who have not skill in profiting by experience,—is to attempt enlarging the prospect of a short-sighted man by bringing him to the top of a hill. Since he could not, on the plain, see distinctly the objects before him, the wider horizon from the hill-top is utterly lost on him.

In the tale of *Sandford and Merton*, where the two boys are described as amusing themselves with building a hovel, they lay

poles horizontally on the top, and cover them with straw, so as to make a flat roof; of course the rain comes through; and Master Merton proposes then to *lay on more straw*. But Sandford, the more intelligent boy, remarks, that as long as the roof is flat, the rain must sooner or later soak through; and that the remedy is, to alter the building, and form the roof sloping. Now, the idea of enlightening incorrect reasoners by additional knowledge, is an error analogous to that of the flat roof: of course knowledge is necessary; so is straw to thatch the roof; but no quantity of materials will be a substitute for understanding how to build.

But the unwise and incautious are always prone to rush from an error on one side into an opposite error. And a reaction accordingly took place from the abuse of reasoning, to the undue neglect of it, and from the fault of not sufficiently observing facts, to that of trusting to a mere accumulation of ill-arranged knowledge. It is as if men had formerly spent vain labour in threshing over and over again the same straw, and winnowing the same chaff, and then their successors had resolved to discard those processes altogether, and to bring home and use wheat and weeds, straw, chaff, and grain, just as they grew, and without any preparation at all.¹

If Bacon had lived in the present day, I am convinced he would have made his chief complaint against unmethodized inquiry, and careless and illogical reasoning; certainly he would *not* have complained of Dialectics as corrupting philosophy. To guard now against the evils prevalent in *his* time, would be to fortify a town against battering-rams instead of against cannon.

(2.) The other remark I would make on Bacon's greater works is, that he does not rank high as a 'Natural-philosopher.' His genius lay another way; not in the direct pursuit of Physical Science, but in discerning and correcting the errors of philosophers, and laying down the principles on which they

¹ *Lectures on Political Economy*, lect. ix.

ought to proceed. According to Horace's illustration, his office was not that of the razor, but the hone, '*acutum reddere quæ ferrum valet, exsors ipsa secandi.*'

The poet Cowley accordingly has beautifully compared Bacon to Moses,

‘Who did upon the very border stand
Of that fair promised land;’

who had brought the Israelites out of Egypt, and led them through the wilderness, to the entrance into the ‘land flowing with milk and honey,’ which he was allowed to view from the hill-top, but not himself to enter.

It requires the master-mind of a great general to form the plan of a campaign, and to direct aright the movements of great bodies of troops: but the greatest general may perhaps fall far short of many a private soldier in the use of the musket or the sword.

But Bacon, though far from being without a taste for the pursuits of physical science, had an actual inaptitude for it, as might be shown by many examples. The discoveries of Copernicus and Galileo, for instance, which had attracted attention before and in his own time, he appears to have rejected or disregarded.

But one of the most remarkable specimens of his inaptitude for practically carrying out his own principles in matters connected with Physical Science, is his speculation concerning the well-known plant called *misselto*. He notices the popular belief of his own time, that it is a true plant, propagated by its berries, which are dropped by birds on the boughs of other trees; a fact alluded to in a Latin proverb applicable to those who create future dangers for themselves; for, the ancient Romans prepared birdlime for catching birds from the *misselto* thus propagated. Now this account of the plant, which has long since been universally admitted, Bacon rejects as a vulgar error, and insists on it that *misselto* is not a true plant, but an excrescence from the tree it grows on! Nothing can be con-

ceived more remote from the spirit of the Baconian philosophy than thus to substitute a random conjecture for careful investigation: and that, too, when there actually did exist a prevailing belief, and it was obviously the first step to inquire whether this were or were not well-founded.

The matter itself, indeed, is of little importance; but it indicates, no less than if it were of the greatest, a deficiency in the application of his own principles. For, one who takes deliberate aim at some object, and misses it, is proved to be a bad marksman, whether the object itself be insignificant or not.

But rarely, if ever, do we find any such failures in Bacon's speculations on human character and conduct. It was there that his strength lay; and in that department of philosophy it may safely be said that he had few to equal, and none to excel him.

In several instances I have treated of subjects respecting which erroneous opinions are current; and I have, in other works, sometimes assigned this as a reason for touching on those subjects. Hence, it has been inferred by more than one critic, that I must be at variance with the generality of mankind in most of my opinions; or, at least, must wish to appear so, for the sake of claiming credit for originality. But there seems no good ground for such an inference. A man might, conceivably, agree with the generality on nineteen points out of twenty, and yet might see reason, when *publishing* is in question, to treat of the one point, and say little or nothing of the nineteen. For it is evidently more important to clear up difficulties, and correct mistakes, than merely to remind men of what they knew before, and prove to them what they already believe. He may be convinced that the sun is brighter than the moon, and that three and two make five, without seeing any need to proclaim to the world his conviction. There is no necessity to write a *book* to prove that liberty is preferable to slavery, and that intemperance is noxious to health. But when errors are afloat on any important question, and especially when they are plausi-

bly defended, the work of refuting them, and of maintaining truths that have been overlooked, is surely more serviceable to the Public than the inculcation and repetition of what all men admit.

I have inserted in the 'Annotations,' extracts from several works of various authors, including some of my own. If I had, instead of this, merely given references, this would have been to expect every reader either to be perfectly familiar with all the works referred to, or at least to have them at hand, and to take the trouble to look out and peruse each passage. This is what I could not reasonably calculate on. And I had seen lamentable instances of an author's being imperfectly understood, and sometimes grievously misunderstood, by many of his readers who were not so familiar as he had expected them to be, with his previous works, and with others which had been alluded to, but not cited.

Cavillers, however—persons of the description noticed in the 'Annotations' on Essay XLVII.—will be likely to complain of the reprinting of passages from other books. And if the opposite course had been adopted, of merely giving references to them, the same cavillers would probably have complained that the reader of this volume was expected to sit down to the study of it with ten or twelve other volumes on the table before him, and to look out each of the passages referred to. Again, if an author, in making an extract from some work of his own, gives a *reference* to it, the caviller will represent him as seeking to puff his own productions: if he *omit* to give the reference, the same caviller will charge him with seeking to pass off as new what had been published before. And again, a reader of this character, if he meet with a statement of something he was already convinced of, will deride it as a *truism* not worth mentioning; while anything that is new to him he will censure as an extravagant paradox. For 'you must think this, look you, that the worm will do his kind.'¹

¹ *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act v.

I chose, then, rather to incur the blame of the fault—if it be one—of encumbering the volume with two or three additional sheets, which, to some readers, may be superfluous, than to run the risk of misleading, or needlessly offending, many others, by omitting, and merely referring to, something essential to the argument, which they might not have seen, or might not distinctly remember.

The passages thus selected are, of course, but a few out of many in which the subjects of these Essays have been treated of. I have inserted those that seemed most to the purpose, without expecting that all persons should agree in approving the selections made. But any one who thinks that some passages from other writers contain better illustrations than those here given, has only to edit the Essays himself with such extracts as he prefers.

To the present edition some additions have been made; one of which—a short ‘Annotation’ on Essay XLVI.—has been printed separate, for the use of purchasers of the former editions, and may be had of the Publishers.

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BACON'S ESSAYS.

ESSAY I. OF TRUTH.

‘WHAT is truth?’ said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be that delight in giddiness, and count it a bondage to fix a belief—affecting¹ free-will in thinking, as well as in acting—and, though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing² wits which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labour which men take in finding out of truth; nor again, that, when it is found, it imposeth³ upon men’s thoughts, that doth bring lies in favour; but a natural, though corrupt love of the lie itself. One of the later schools of the Grecians examineth the matter, and is at a stand to think what should be in it, that men should love lies, where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets, nor for advantage, as with the merchant, but for the lie’s sake. But I cannot tell: this same truth is a naked and open daylight, that doth not show the masques, and mummeries, and triumphs of the world, half so stately and daintily⁴ as candle-lights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day; but it will not rise to the price of a

¹ Affect. *To aim at; endeavour after.*

‘This proud man affects imperial sway.’—Dryden.

² Discoursing. *Discursive; rambling.*

‘We, through madness,
Form strange conceits in our discoursing brains,
And prate of things as we pretend they were.’—Ford.

³ Impose upon. *To lay a restraint upon.* (Bacon’s Latin original is, ‘Cogitationibus imponitur captivitas.’)

‘Unreasonable impositions on the mind and practice.’—Watts.

⁴ Daintily. *Elegantly.*

‘The Duke exceeded in that his leg was daintily formed.’—Wotton.

diamond or carbuncle that showeth best in varied lights. A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would,¹ and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing² to themselves? One of the fathers, in great severity, called poesy '*vinum dæmonum*,'³ because it filleth the imagination, and yet is but with the shadow of a lie. But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in and settleth in it that doth the hurt, such as we spake of before. But howsoever⁴ these things are thus in men's depraved judgments and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making, or wooing of it—the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it—and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it—is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense, the last was the light of reason, and his Sabbath work, ever since, is the illumination of his spirit. First he breathed light upon the face of the matter, or chaos, then he breathed light into the face of man; and still he breatheth and inspireth light into the face of his chosen. The poet,⁵ that beautified the sect⁶ that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well, 'It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tost upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventures⁷ thereof below; but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth (a hill not to be

¹ As one would. *At pleasure; unrestrained.*

² Unpleasing. *Unpleasant; distasteful.*

'How dares thy tongue
Sound the *unpleasing* news?'—*Shakespeare.*

³ 'Wine of demons.'—*Augustine.*

⁴ Howsoever. *Although.*

'The man doth fear God, *howsoever* it seems not in him.'—*Shakespeare.*

⁵ Lucretius, ii.

⁶ The Epicureans.

⁷ Adventures. *Fortunes.*

'She smiled with silver cheer,
And wished me fair *adventure* for the year.'—*Dryden.*

commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene), and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below;’ so¹ always that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly it is heaven upon earth to have a man’s mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.

To pass from theological and philosophical truth to the truth of civil business, it will be acknowledged, even by those that practise it not, that clear and round² dealing is the honour of man’s nature, and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth³ it; for these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent, which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious; and therefore Montaigne saith prettily, when he inquired the reason why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace, and such an odious charge, ‘If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth, is as much as to say that he is brave towards God, and a coward towards man; for a lie faces God, and shrinks from man.’⁴ Surely the wickedness of falsehood and breach of faith cannot possibly be so highly expressed as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men: it being foretold, that when ‘Christ cometh,’ he shall not ‘find faith upon earth.’

¹ So. *Provided*. ‘So that the doctrine be wholesome and edifying, a want of exactness in the manner of speech may be overlooked.’—*Atterbury*.

² Round. *Plain; fair; candid*.

‘I will a round, unvarnished tale deliver.’—*Shakespeare*.

³ Embase. *To vitiate; to alloy*. ‘A pleasure, high, rational, and angelic; a pleasure embased by no appendant sting.’—*South*.

⁴ *Essais*, liv. ii. chap. xviii.

ANNOTATIONS.

“ *What is truth?*” said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer.’

Any one of Bacon’s acuteness, or of a quarter of it, might easily have perceived, had he at all attended to the context of the narrative, that never was any one less in a *jesting* mood than Pilate on this occasion. He was anxious to release Jesus; which must have been from a knowledge of the superhuman powers of Him he had to do with. A man so unscrupulous as Pilate is universally admitted to have been, could not have felt any anxiety merely from a dislike of injustice; and therefore his conduct is one confirmation of the reality of the numerous miracles Jesus wrought. They, and they only, must have filled him with dread of the consequences of doing any wrong to such a person, and probably, also, inspired him with a hope of furthering some ambitious views of his own, by taking part with one whom he (in common with so many others) expected to be just about to assume temporal dominion, and to enforce his claim by resistless power. He tries to make Him proclaim Himself a King; and when Jesus does this, but adds that his kingdom is not of this world, still Pilate catches at the word, and says, ‘Art thou a king, then?’ Jesus then proceeds to designate *who* should be his *subjects*: ‘Every one that *is of the Truth* heareth my words:’ as much as to say, ‘I claim a kingdom, not over the Israelites by race; not over all whom I can subjugate by force, or who will submit to me through fear or interest; but over the *votaries of truth*,—those who are ‘of the truth,’—those who are willing to receive whatever shall be proved true, and to follow *wherever* that shall lead. And Pilate is at a loss to see what this has to do with his inquiry. ‘I am asking you about your claims to empire, and you tell me about truth: what has truth to do with the question?’

Most readers overlook the drift of our Lord’s answer, and interpret the words as a mere assertion (which every teacher makes) of the truth of what He taught; as if He had said, ‘Every one that heareth my words is of the Truth.’

And commentators usually satisfy themselves with such an

interpretation as makes the expression *intelligible in itself*, without considering how far it is *pertinent*. A mere assertion of the truth of his teaching would not have been at all relevant to the inquiry made. But what He did say was evidently a description of the persons who were to be the subjects of the kingdom that 'is not of this world.'

Much to the same effect is his declaration that those who should be his disciples indeed should 'know the Truth,' and the 'Truth should make them free;' and that 'if any man will do' [is willing to do] 'the will of the Father, he shall know of the doctrine.' Men were not to become his disciples in consequence of their knowing and perceiving the truth of what He taught, but in consequence of their having sufficient candour to receive the evidence which his miracles afforded, and being so thoroughly 'of the Truth,' as to give themselves up to follow wherever that should lead, in opposition to any prejudices or inclinations of their own; and then knowledge of the Truth was to be their reward. There is not necessarily any moral virtue in receiving truth; for it may happen that our interest, or our wishes, are in the same direction; or it may be forced upon us by evidence as irresistible as that of a mathematical demonstration. The virtue consists in being a sincere votary of Truth;—what our Lord calls being 'of the Truth,'—rejecting 'the hidden things of dishonesty,' and carefully guarding against every undue bias. Every one wishes to have Truth *on his side*; but it is not every one that sincerely wishes to be *on the side of Truth*.

'The inquiry of truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it.'¹

This love-making or wooing of Truth implies that first step towards attaining the establishment of the habit of a steady thorough-going adherence to it in all philosophic, and especially religious, inquiry—the strong conviction of its value. To this must be united a distrust of ourselves. Men miss truth more often from their indifference about it than from intellectual incapacity. A well-known statesman is reported to have said that 'no gentleman would ever change his religion.' And

¹ The chief part of what follows, I have taken the liberty to extract from the *Essay on Truth* (2nd Series). The different senses of the word 'truth' are treated of in the *Elements of Logic*, app. i.

an author of some note, a professed Protestant Christian, has been heard to declare that he thought very ill of any one who did so; ‘unless it were,’ he said, ‘one man in a million,—some person of surpassing genius.’¹ And this sentiment (which implies a total indifference to truth and falsehood) has been cited with approbation.

Some men, again, from supposing themselves to have *found* truth, take for granted that it was *for* truth they were seeking. But if we either care not to be lovers of Truth, or take for granted that we are such, without taking any pains to acquire the habit, it is not likely that we ever shall acquire it.

Many objections have been urged against the very effort to cultivate such a habit. One is, that we cannot be required to make Truth our main object, but *happiness*; that our ultimate end is not the mere knowledge of what is *true*, but the attainment of what is *good* to ourselves and to others. But this, when urged as an objection to the maxim, that Truth should be sought for its own sake, is evidently founded on a mistake as to its meaning. It is evident, in the first place, that it does not mean the pursuit of *all* truth on all subjects. It would be ridiculous for a single individual to aim at universal knowledge, or even at the knowledge of all that is within the reach of the human faculties and worthy of human study. The question is respecting the pursuit of truth in each subject on which each person desires *to make up his mind and form an opinion*. And secondly, the purport of the maxim that in these points truth should be our object, is, that not mere barren knowledge without practice—truth without any *ulterior* end, should be sought, but that truth should be sought and followed confidently, not in each instance, only so far as we *perceive* it to be expedient, and from motives of policy, but with a full conviction both that it is, in the end, always expedient, with a view to the attainment of ulterior objects (no permanent advantage being attainable by departing from it), and also, that, even if some end, otherwise advantageous, *could* be promoted by such a departure, that alone would constitute it an evil;—that truth, in short, is

¹ It was the same person to whom I have alluded in the *Thoughts on the Sabbath*, as declaring that a doctrine which he himself thought utterly groundless, ought, as a matter of expediency, to be sedulously inculcated on the mass of mankind. There is a strange kind of sincerity in this frank avowal of insincerity. I wish I could be sure that all are scrupulous adherents to truth who do *not* thus plainly proclaim their contempt of it.

in itself, independently of its results, preferable to error; that honesty claims a preference to deceit, even without taking into account its being the best policy.

Another objection, if it can be so called, is that a perfectly candid and unbiassed state of mind—a habit of judging in each case entirely according to the evidence—is *unattainable*. But the same may be said of every other virtue: a perfect regulation of any one of the human passions is probably not more attainable than perfect candour; but we are not therefore to give a loose to the passions; we are not to relax our efforts for the attainment of any virtue, on the ground that, after all, we shall fall short of perfection.

Another objection which has been urged is, that it is not even desirable, were it possible, to bring the mind into a state of perfectly unbiassed indifference, so as to weigh the evidence in each case with complete impartiality. This objection arises, I conceive, from an indistinct and confused notion of the sense of the terms employed. A candid and unbiassed state of mind, which is sometimes called *indifference*, or impartiality, *i. e.*, of the *judgment*, does not imply an indifference of the *will*—an absence of all wish on either side, but merely an absence of all influence of the wishes in forming our decision,—all leaning of the judgment on the side of inclination,—all perversion of the evidence in consequence. That we should *wish* to find truth on one side rather than the other, is in many cases not only unavoidable, but commendable; but to *think* that true which we wish, without impartially weighing the evidence on both sides, is undeniably a folly, though a very common one. If a mode of effectual and speedy cure be proposed to a sick man, he cannot but wish that the result of his inquiries concerning it may be a well-grounded conviction of the safety and efficacy of the remedy prescribed. It would be no mark of wisdom to be indifferent to the restoration of health; but if his wishes should lead him (as is frequently the case) to put implicit confidence in the remedy without any just grounds for it, he would deservedly be taxed with folly.

In like manner (to take the instance above alluded to), a good man will indeed *wish* to find the evidence of the christian religion satisfactory, but will weigh the evidence the more carefully, on account of the importance of the question.

But indifference of the *will* and indifference of the *judgment* are two very distinct things that are often confounded. A conclusion may safely be adopted, though in accordance with inclination, provided it be not founded upon it. No doubt the judgment is often biassed by the inclinations; but it is possible, and it should be our endeavour, to guard against this bias. And by the way, it is utterly a mistake to suppose that the bias is always *in favour* of the conclusion wished for; it is often in the contrary direction. There is in some minds an unreasonable doubt in cases where their wishes are strong—a morbid distrust of evidence which they are especially anxious to find conclusive. The proverbial expression of ‘too good news to be true’ bears witness to the existence of this feeling. Each of us probably has a nature leaning towards one or the other (often towards both, at different times) of these infirmities;—the over-estimate or under-estimate of the reasons in favour of a conclusion we earnestly desire to find true. Our aim should be, not to fly from one extreme to the other, but to avoid both, and to give a verdict according to the evidence, preserving the indifference of the judgment even when the will *cannot*, and indeed *should* not, be indifferent.

There are persons, again, who, in supposed compliance with the precept, ‘Lean not to thine own understanding,’ regard it as a duty to suppress all exercise of the intellectual powers, in every case where the feelings are at variance with the conclusions of reason. They deem it right to ‘consult the heart more than the head;’ that is, to surrender themselves, advisedly, to the bias of any prejudice that may happen to be present; thus deliberately, and on principle, burying in the earth the talent entrusted to them, and hiding under a bushel the candle that God has lighted up in the soul. Though there never was a time when there was not much absurd falsehood afloat, and when there were not many who believed what they did believe, whether false or true, not on any rational grounds, but according to their feelings or fancies, still, the *open approval* of all this,—the avowed disregard of *truth*, and contempt of Reason,—is somewhat characteristic of the present Age. In some Periodical a reviewer who eulogizes a certain Author on account of his ‘glorious imaginings,’ gives him a decided preference *even when his religious views are erroneous*, to others, when they are in the

right, but without these glorious imaginings! And another Critic declares (expressing at the same time his hearty acquiescence in this state of things), that 'the Mass of men accept a creed, not because it approves itself to their intellect, but because through electric sympathy it has conquered their whole being.'

In this there is much truth. For how else could one account for the millions of ancient and of modern Pagans believing in the extravagances of their Mythology: and the millions who believe in the pretensions of Mahomet: and the millions of Christians who believe in the Legends of Saints; besides Mormonites, Irvingites, and many other such? But the curious circumstance is that the Critic evidently thinks such a procedure quite right and desirable; he says that 'Faith justifies Reason: that Reason can never justify Faith.'

The Writers I have referred to (to whom several others might have been added) are not cited as being *eminent* ones, but just the contrary. For, the opinions of any one who is *distinguished* by ability, and originality of mind, are only the opinions of an individual. But those who belong to the mere 'rank and file,'—who are disposed (as Shakespere expresses it) to 'catch the tune of the times,' and rather to follow public opinion than to lead it—these afford some indication of what are the *prevalent* notions. For, 'a straw'—according to the Proverb—'best shows how the wind blows.' Any one, therefore, who should resolve not to read or hear anything that is silly or absurd, would remain unacquainted with a large portion of human nature.

It is not, of course, intended to recommend presumptuous inquiries into things beyond the reach of our faculties,—attempts to be wise above what is written,—or groundless confidence in the certainty of our conclusions; but unless reason be employed in ascertaining what doctrines are revealed, humility cannot be exercised in acquiescing in them; and there is surely at least as much presumption in measuring everything by our own feelings, fancies, and prejudices, as by our own reasonings. Such voluntary humiliation is a prostration, not of ourselves before God, but of one part of ourselves before another part, and resembles the idolatry of the Israelites in the wilderness: 'The people *stripped themselves* of their golden ornaments, and cast them into the fire, and there came out this calf.' We ought to remember that the disciples were led by the dictates of

a sound *understanding* to say, 'No man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him;' and thence to believe and trust, and obey Jesus implicitly; but that Peter was led by his *heart* (that is, his inclinations and prejudices) to say, 'Be it far from thee, Lord! there shall no such thing happen unto thee.'

It is to be remembered also that the intellectual powers are sometimes pressed into the service, as it were, of the feelings, and that a man may be thus misled, in a great measure, through his own ingenuity. 'Depend on it,' said a shrewd observer, when inquired of, what was to be expected from a certain man who had been appointed to some high office, and of whose intelligence he thought more favourably than of his uprightness,— 'depend on it, he will never take any step that is bad, without having a very good reason to give for it.' Now it is common to warn men—and they are generally ready enough to take the warning—against being thus misled by the ingenuity of *another*; but a person of more than ordinary learning and ability needs to be carefully on his guard against being misled by *his own*. Though conscious, perhaps, of his own power to dress up speciously a bad cause, or an extravagant and fanciful theory, he is conscious also of a corresponding power to distinguish sound reasoning from sophistry. But this will not avail to protect him from convincing himself by ingenious sophistry of his own, if he has allowed himself to adopt some conclusion which pleases his imagination, or favours some passion or self-interest. His own superior intelligence will then be, as I have said, pressed into the service of his inclinations. It is, indeed, no feeble blow that will suffice to destroy a giant; but if a giant resolves to commit suicide, it is a giant that deals the blow.

When, however, we have made up our minds as to the importance of seeking in every case for truth with an unprejudiced mind, the greatest difficulty still remains; which arises from the confidence we are apt to feel that we have already done this, and have sought for truth with success. For every one must of course be convinced of the truth of his own opinion, if it be properly called *his* opinion; and yet the variety of men's opinions furnishes a proof how many must be mistaken. If any one, then, would guard against mistake, as far as his intellectual faculties will allow, he must make it the *first question* in each case, 'Is this true?' It is not enough to believe what you

maintain ; you must maintain what you believe, and maintain it *because* you believe it ; and that, on the most careful and impartial view of the evidence on both sides. For any one may bring himself to believe almost anything that he is inclined to believe, and thinks it becoming or expedient to maintain. Some persons, accordingly, who describe themselves—in one sense, correctly—as ‘*following* the dictates of conscience,’ are doing so only in the same sense in which a person who is driving in a carriage may be said to *follow* his horses, which go in whatever direction he guides them. It is in a determination to ‘obey the Truth,’ and to follow wherever she may lead, that the genuine love of truth consists ; and this can be realized in practice only by *postponing* all other questions to that which ought ever to come foremost—‘What is the truth ?’ If this question be asked only in the *second* place, it is likely to receive a very different answer from what it would if it had been asked in the *first* place. The minds of most men are *preoccupied* by some feeling or other which influences their judgment (either on the side of truth or of error, as it may happen) and enlists their learning and ability on the side, whatever it may be, which they are predisposed to adopt.

I shall merely enumerate a few of the most common of these feelings that present obstacles to the pursuit or propagation of truth :—Aversion to *doubt*—desire of a supposed happy medium—the love of system—the dread of the character of inconsistency—the love of novelty—the dread of innovation—undue deference to human authority—the love of approbation, and the dread of censure—regard to seeming expediency.

The greatest of all these obstacles to the habit of following truth is the last mentioned—the tendency to look, in the first instance, to the *expedient*. It is this principle that influences men to the reservation, or to the (so-called) development, but real depravation, of truth ; and that leads to pious frauds in one or other of the two classes into which they naturally fall, of positive and negative—the one, the introduction and propagation of what is false ; the other, the mere toleration of it. He who propagates a delusion, and he who connives at it when already existing, both alike tamper with truth. We must neither *lead* nor *leave* men to mistake falsehood for truth. Not to undeceive is to deceive. The giving, or not correcting, false reasons

for right conclusions—false grounds for right belief—false principles for right practice; the holding forth or fostering false consolations, false encouragements, and false sanctions, or conniving at their being held forth or believed, are all pious frauds. This springs from, and it will foster and increase, a want of veneration for truth; it is an affront put on ‘the Spirit of Truth:’ it is a hiring of the idolatrous Syrians to fight the battles of the Lord God of Israel. And it is on this ground that we should adhere to the most scrupulous fairness of statement and argument. He who believes that sophistry will always in the end prove injurious to the cause supported by it, is probably right in that belief; but if it be for that reason that he abstains from it,—if he avoid fallacy, wholly or partly, through fear of *detection*,—it is plain he is no sincere votary of truth.

It may be added that many who would never bring themselves to say anything positively false, yet need to be warned against the falsehood of suppression or extenuation;—against the unfairness of giving what is called a one-sided representation. Among writers (whether of argumentative works or of fictions), even such as are far from wholly unscrupulous, there are many who seem to think it allowable and right to set forth all the good that is on one side, and all the evil on the other. They compare together, and decide on, the gardens of A and of B, after having culled from the one a nosegay of the choicest flowers, and from the other all the weeds they could spy. And those who object to this, are often regarded as trimmers, or lukewarm, or inconsistent. But to such as deal evenhanded justice to both sides, and lay down Scylla and Charybdis in the same chart,—to them, and, generally speaking, to them only, it is given to find that the fair course, which they have pursued *because* it is the fair course, is also, in the long run, the most expedient.

On the same principle, we are bound never to countenance any erroneous opinion, however seemingly beneficial in its results—never to connive at any salutary delusion (as it may appear), but to open the eyes (when opportunity offers, and in proportion as it offers) of those we are instructing, to any mistake they may labour under, though it may be one which leads them ultimately to a true result, and to one of which they might otherwise fail. The temptation to depart from this principle is

sometimes excessively strong, because it will often be the case that men will be in some danger, in parting with a long-admitted error, of abandoning, at the same time, some truth they have been accustomed to connect with it. Accordingly, censures have been passed on the endeavours to enlighten the adherents of some erroneous Churches, on the ground that many of them thence become atheists, and many, the wildest of fanatics. That this should have been in some instances the case is highly probable; it is a natural result of the pernicious effects on the mind of any system of blind, uninquiring acquiescence; such a system is an Evil Spirit, which we must expect will cruelly rend and mangle the patient as it comes out of him, and will leave him half dead at its departure. There will often be, and oftener appear to be, danger in removing a mistake; the danger that those who have been long used to act rightly on erroneous principles may fail of the desired conclusions when undeceived. In such cases it requires a thorough love of truth, and a firm reliance on divine support, to adhere steadily to the straight course. If we give way to a dread of danger from the inculcation of any truth, physical, moral, or religious, we manifest a want of faith in God's power, or in his will to maintain his own cause. There may be danger attendant on every truth, since there is none that may not be perverted by some, or that may not give offence to others; but, in the case of anything which plainly appears to be truth, every danger must be braved. We must maintain the truth as we have received it, and trust to Him who is 'the Truth' to prosper and defend it.

One of the strongest and most prevalent temptations is 'the fear of *impairing one's influence*.' A man is often induced to keep back some unwelcome truth, or to abstain from protesting against some prevailing error or fault, lest he should thereby raise a prejudice against himself that would lessen the influence he might hereafter exert beneficially in some other case. And thus he will perhaps be led on to make one concession after another, till he goes down to the grave with his Talent laid up in a napkin; having omitted, through dread of losing his influence, to use it where it was most needed; like a miser who passes his life practically in abject poverty, for fear of becoming poor.

That we shall indeed best further any good cause by fearless per-

severance in an open and straight course, I am firmly persuaded; but it is not only when we *perceive* the mischiefs of falsehood and disguise, and the beneficial tendency of fairness and candour, that we are to be followers of truth; the trial of our faith is when we *cannot* perceive this: and the part of a lover of Truth is to follow her at all seeming hazards, after the example of Him who ‘came into the world that he should bear witness to the Truth.’ This straightforward course may not, indeed, obtain ‘the praise of men.’ Courage, liberality, activity, and other good qualities, are often highly prized by those who do not possess them in any great degree; but the zealous, thorough-going love of truth is not very much admired or liked, or indeed understood, except by those who possess it. But Truth, as Bacon says, ‘only doth judge itself,’ and, ‘howsoever these things are in men’s depraved judgments and affections, it teacheth that the inquiry of Truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it—the knowledge of Truth, which is the presence of it—and the belief of Truth, which is the enjoying of it—is the sovereign good of human nature.’

‘There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame, as to be found false and perfidious.’

This holds good when falsehood is practised solely for a man’s private advantage: but, in a zealous and able partisan, falsehood in the cause of the party will often be pardoned, and even justified. We have lived to see the system called ‘*phenakism*,’ ‘*double-doctrine*,’ or ‘*economy*,’—that is, saying something quite different from what is inwardly believed, not only practised, but openly avowed and vindicated, and those who practise it held up as models of pre-eminent holiness, not only by those of their own party, but by others also.

When men who have repeatedly brought forward, publicly, heavy charges against a certain Church, afterwards openly declare that those charges were what they knew, *at the time*, to be quite undeserved, they are manifestly proclaiming their own insincerity. Perhaps they did believe—and perhaps they believe still—that those charges are just; and if so, their present disavowal is a falsehood. But if, as they now profess, the charges are what they believed to be calumnious falsehoods,

uttered because the *same things had been said by some eminent divines*, and because they were '*necessary for our position*' then, they confess themselves 'false and perfidious ;' and yet they are not 'covered with shame.'

It is remarkable, that although it is proverbial that 'a liar is likely to be disbelieved even when he speaks the truth,' yet with some persons the opposite result will sometimes take place. One who has made confession of a long course of imposture will sometimes obtain thenceforward credit for veracity.

A remarkable instance of this was an impostor who about forty years ago excited much public attention. She called herself Caraboo (her real name being Mary Baker), and persuaded many persons in the neighbourhood of Bristol, and elsewhere, that she was an Oriental Princess. Some of her writing, in her pretended language, was sent to me at Oxford for inspection, and I at once pronounced it to be an imposture. But even after this, many continued deluded by her. When at length she was fully detected, some strange accounts of her early history and of the origin of her imposture were circulated, and were by many believed on *her* authority. 'This is all very curious ; but how do you know that there is any truth in it ?' 'Why, she says so herself.' 'But she is a notorious liar.' 'Oh, but she has *confessed* all her falsehoods, and is now giving the true account.'

These persons seem to have considered Mendacity as a disease similar to Measles or Smallpox, from which a man is exempted by having *once had it* !

The operation of this strange principle has been largely experienced by those mentioned just above as having not only acted on, but avowed and defended the system of 'Reserve,' 'Economy,' 'Phenakism,' or 'Double-doctrine.' Many, even of those who have not joined their party, give them credit for *sincerity* ; on the ground, apparently, of their having frankly proclaimed their insincerity.¹

¹ See *Cautions for the Times*, No. xiii. See also Dr. West's Discourse on 'Reserve.' (Fellowes.) See also the Essay on 'Simulation.'

ESSAY II. OF DEATH.

MEN fear death as children fear to go into the dark ; and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other. Certainly, the contemplation of death, as the wages of sin, and passage to another world, is holy and religious ; but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto nature, is weak. Yet in religious meditations there is sometimes mixture of vanity and of superstition. You shall read in some of the friars' books of mortification, that a man should think with himself what the pain is, if he have but his finger's end pressed, or tortured, and thereby imagine what the pains of death are when the whole body is corrupted and dissolved ; when many times death passeth with less pain than the torture of a limb—for the most vital parts are not the quickest of sense : and by him that spake only as a philosopher and natural man, it was well said, '*Pompa mortis magis terret quam mors ipsa.*'¹ Groans, and convulsions, and a discoloured face, and friends weeping, and blacks, and obsequies, and the like, show death terrible.

It is worthy the observing, that there is no passion in the mind of man so weak, but it mates² and masters the fear of death ; and therefore death is no such terrible enemy when a man hath so many attendants about him that can win the combat of him. Revenge triumphs over death : love slights it ; honour aspireth to it ; grief flieth to it ; fear pre-occupateth³ it ; nay, we read, after Otho the Emperor had slain himself, pity (which is the tenderest of affections) pro-

¹ 'The pomp of death is more terrible than death itself.' Probably suggested by a letter of Seneca to Lucilius, 24.

² Mate. *To subdue ; vanquish ; overpower.*

'The Frenchmen he hath so mated
And their courage abated,
That they are but half men.'—*Skelton.*

'My sense she has mated.'—*Shakespeare.*

So to give check-mate.

³ Preoccupate. *To anticipate.*

'To provide so tenderly by preoccupation,
As no spider may suck poison out of a rose.'—*Garnet.*

voked¹ many to die out of mere compassion to their sovereign, and as the truest sort of followers. Nay, Seneca adds, niceness and satiety : ‘Cogita quamdiu eadem feceris ; mori velle, non tantum fortis, aut miser, sed etiam fastidiosus potest.’² ‘A man would die, though he were neither valiant nor miserable, only upon a weariness to do the same thing so oft over and over.’ It is no less worthy to observe, how little alteration in good spirits the approaches of death make ; for they appear to be the same men to the last instant. Augustus Cæsar died in a compliment : ‘Livia, conjugii nostri memor vive, et vale.’³ Tiberius in dissimulation, as Tacitus saith of him, ‘Jam Tiberium vires et corpus, non dissimulatio, deserebant :’⁴ Vespasian in a jest, sitting upon the stool, ‘Ut puto Deus fio :’ Galba with a sentence, ‘Feri, si ex re sit populi Romani,’⁵ holding forth his neck : Septimus Severus in dispatch, ‘Adeste, si quid mihi restat agendum,’⁶ and the like. Certainly the Stoics bestowed too much cost upon death, and by their great preparations made it appear more fearful. Better, saith he, ‘qui finem vitæ extremum inter munera ponat naturæ.’⁷ It is as natural to die as to be born ; and to a little infant, perhaps, the one is as painful as the other. He that dies in an earnest pursuit, is like one that is wounded in hot blood ; who, for the time, scarce feels the hurt ; and therefore a mind fixed and bent upon somewhat that is good, doth avert the dolours⁸ of death : but, above all, believe it, the sweetest canticle is, ‘Nunc dimittis,’⁹ when a man hath obtained worthy ends and expectations. Death hath this also, that it openeth the gate to good fame, and extinguisheth envy : ‘Extinctus amabitur idem.’¹⁰

¹ Provoke. *To excite ; to move* (to exertion or feeling of any kind, not, as now, merely to anger). ‘Your zeal hath *provoked* very many.’—2 *Cor.* ix. 2.

² *Ad Lucil.* 77.

³ ‘Livia, mindful of our wedlock, live, and farewell.’—Suet. *Aug. Vit.* c. 100.

⁴ ‘His powers and bodily strength had abandoned Tiberius, but not his dissimulation.’—*Annal.* vi. 50.

⁵ ‘Strike, if it be for the benefit of the Roman people.’—Tacit. *Hist.* i. 41.

⁶ ‘Hasten, if anything remains for me to do.’—*Dio Cas.* 76, *ad fin.*

⁷ ‘He who accounts the close of life among the boons of nature.’—Juv. *Sat.* 357.

⁸ Dolours. *Pains.*

‘He drew the *dolours* from the wounded part.’—Pope’s *Homer.*

⁹ ‘Now lettest thou thy servant depart.’—*Luke* ii. 29.

¹⁰ ‘The same man shall be beloved when dead.’

ANTITHETA ON DEATH.

PRO.

'Non invenias inter humanos affectum tam pusillum, qui si intendatur paulo vehementius, non mortis metum superet.

'There is no human passion so weak and contemptible, that it may not easily be so heightened as to overcome the fear of death.'

CONTRA.

'Præstat ad omnia, etiam ad virtutem, curriculum longum, quam breve.

'In all things, even in virtue, a long race is more conducive to success than a short one.'

'Absque spatiis vitæ majoribus, nec perficere datur, nec perdiscere, nec pœnitere.

'It is only in a long life that time is afforded us to complete anything, to learn anything thoroughly, or to reform oneself.'

 ANNOTATIONS.

'There is no passion in the mind of man so weak, but it mates and masters the fear of death.'

Of all the instances that can be given of recklessness of life, there is none that comes near that of the workmen employed in what is called *dry-pointing*; the grinding of needles and of table-forks. The fine steel-dust which they breathe brings on a painful disease of which they are almost sure to die before forty. And yet not only are men tempted by high wages to engage in this employment, but they resist to the utmost all the contrivances devised for diminishing the danger; through fear that this would cause more workmen to offer themselves, and thus lower wages!

The case of sailors, soldiers, miners, and others who engage in hazardous employments, is nothing in comparison of this; because people of a sanguine temper hope to *escape* the dangers. But the dry-pointers have to encounter, not the *risk*, but the *certainty*, of an early and painful death. The thing would seem incredible, if it were not so fully attested. All this proves that avarice overcomes the fear of death. And so may vanity: witness the many women who wear tight dresses, and will even employ washes for the complexion which they know to be highly dangerous and even destructive to their health.

Still more strange is what is reported, on good authority, of the Chinese. It is said to happen not unfrequently, that a man under sentence of death will hire another to take his place; who, for a sum of no great amount, will submit to death, and that, by torture (according to the barbarous practice of the country), for the sake of securing a provision for his family, and also (what the Chinese make a great point of) a handsome burial-place for himself!

‘Certainly the contemplation of death, as the wages of sin and the passage to another world, is holy and religious.’

It is when considered as the passage to another world that the contemplation of death becomes holy and religious;—that is, calculated to promote a state of preparedness for our setting out on this great voyage,—our departure from this world to enter the other. It is manifest that those who are engrossed with the things that pertain to this life alone; who are devoted to worldly pleasure, to worldly gain, honour, or power, are certainly not preparing themselves for the passage into another: while it is equally manifest that the change of heart, of desires, wishes, tastes, thoughts, dispositions, which constitutes a meetness for entrance into a happy, holy, heavenly state,—the hope of which can indeed ‘mate and master the fear of death,’—must take place here on earth; not after death.

There is a remarkable phenomenon connected with insect life which has often occurred to my mind while meditating on the subject of preparedness for a future state, as presenting a curious analogy.

Most persons know that every *butterfly* (the Greek name for which, it is remarkable, is the same that signifies also the *Soul*,—*Psyche*) comes from a grub or caterpillar; in the language of naturalists called a *larva*. The last name (which signifies literally a *mask*) was introduced by Linnæus, because the caterpillar is a kind of outward covering, or disguise, of the future butterfly within. For, it has been ascertained by curious microscopic examination, that a distinct butterfly, only undeveloped and not full-grown, is contained within the body of the caterpillar; that this latter has its own organs of digestion, respiration, &c., suitable to its larva-life, quite distinct from, and inde-

pendent of, the future butterfly which it encloses. When the proper period arrives, and the life of the insect, in this its first stage, is to close, it becomes what is called a pupa, enclosed in a chrysalis or cocoon (often composed of silk ; as is that of the silkworm which supplies us that important article), and lies torpid for a time within this natural coffin, from which it issues, at the proper period, as a perfect butterfly.

But sometimes this process is marred. There is a numerous tribe of insects well known to naturalists, called Ichneumon-flies ; which in their larva-state are *parasitical*; that is, inhabit, and feed on, other larvæ. The ichneumon-fly, being provided with a long sharp sting, which is in fact an *ovipositor* (egg-layer), pierces with this the body of the caterpillar in several places, and deposits her eggs, which are there hatched, and feed, as grubs (larvæ) on the inward parts of their victim. A most wonderful circumstance connected with this process is, that a caterpillar which has been thus attacked goes on feeding, and apparently thriving quite as well, during the whole of its larva-life, as those that have escaped. For, by a wonderful provision of instinct, the ichneumon-grubs within do not injure any of the organs of the larva, but feed only on the future butterfly enclosed within it. And consequently, it is hardly possible to distinguish a caterpillar which has these enemies within it from those that are untouched.—But when the period arrives for the close of the larva-life, the difference appears. You may often observe the common cabbage-caterpillars retiring, to undergo their change, into some sheltered spot,—such as the walls of a summer-house ; and some of them—those that have escaped the parasites,—assuming the pupa-state, from which they emerge, butterflies. Of the unfortunate caterpillar that has been preyed upon, nothing remains but an empty skin. The hidden butterfly has been secretly consumed.

Now is there not something analogous to this wonderful phenomenon, in the condition of some of our race?—may not a man have a kind of secret enemy within his own bosom, destroying his soul,—*Psyche*,—though without interfering with his well-being *during the present stage* of his existence ; and whose presence may never be detected till the time arrives when the *last great change* should take place ?

'Death hath this also, that it openeth the gate to good fame, and extinguisheth envy.'

Bacon might have added, that the generosity extended to the departed is sometimes carried rather to an extreme. To abstain from censure of them is fair enough. But to make an ostentatious parade of the supposed admirable qualities of persons who attracted no notice in their life-time, and again (which is much more common), to publish laudatory biographies (to say nothing of raising subscriptions for monumental testimonials) of persons who did attract notice in a disreputable way, and respecting whom it would have been the kindest thing to let them be forgotten,—this is surely going a little too far.

But private friends and partisans are tempted to pursue this course by the confidence that no one will come forward to contradict them: according to the lines of Swift,—

*'De mortuis nil nisi bonum ;
When scoundrels die, let all bemoan 'em.'*

Then, again, there are some who bestow eulogisms that are really just, on persons whom they had always been accustomed to revile, calumniate, thwart, and persecute on every occasion; and this they seem to regard as establishing their own character for eminent generosity. Nor are they usually mistaken in their calculation; for if not absolutely commended for their magnanimous moderation, they usually escape, at least, the well-deserved reproach for not having done justice, during his life, to the object of their posthumous praises,—for having been occupied in opposing and insulting one who—by their own showing—deserved quite contrary treatment.

It may fairly be suspected that the one circumstance respecting him which they secretly dwell on with the most satisfaction, though they do not mention it, is that he is *dead*; and that they delight in bestowing their posthumous honours on him, chiefly because they are *posthumous*; according to the concluding couplet in the *Verses on the Death of Dean Swift*:—

*'And since you dread no further lashes,
Methinks you may forgive his ashes.'*

But the Public is wonderfully tolerant of any persons who will but, in any way, speak favourably of the dead, even when by so doing they pronounce their own condemnation.

Sometimes, however, the opposite fault is committed. Strong party feeling will lead zealous partisans to misrepresent the conduct and character of the deceased, or to ignore (according to the modern phrase) some of the most remarkable things done by him.¹

But then they generally put in for the praise of generosity by eulogizing some very insignificant acts, and thus 'damn with faint praise.'

¹ See an instance of this alluded to in the *Remains of Bishop Copleston*, pp. 89—93.

ESSAY III. OF UNITY IN RELIGION.

RELIGION being the chief bond of human society, it is a happy thing when itself is well contained within the true bond of unity. The quarrels and divisions about religion were evils unknown to the heathen. The reason was, because the religion of the heathen consisted rather in rites and ceremonies than in any constant belief; for you may imagine what kind of faith theirs was, when the chief doctors¹ and fathers of their church were the poets. But the true God hath this attribute, that He is a jealous God;² and therefore his worship and religion will endure no mixture nor partner. We shall therefore speak a few words concerning the unity of the Church; what are the fruits thereof; what the bonds; and what the means.

The fruits of unity (next unto the well-pleasing of God, which is all in all) are two; the one towards those that are without the Church, the other towards those that are within. For the former, it is certain, that heresies and schisms are of all others the greatest scandals, yea, more than corruption of manners; for as in the natural body a wound or solution of continuity³ is worse than a corrupt humour, so in the spiritual: so that nothing doth so much keep men out of the Church, and drive men out of the Church, as breach of unity; and, therefore, whensoever it cometh to that pass that one saith, 'Ecce in deserto,'⁴ another saith, 'Ecce in penetralibus,'⁵—that is, when some men seek Christ in the conventicles of heretics, and others in an outward face of a Church, that voice had need continually to sound in men's ears, 'Nolite exire.'⁶ The Doctor of the Gentiles (the propriety⁷ of whose vocation⁸ drew him to

¹ Doctors. *Teachers*. 'Sitting in the midst of the doctors.'—*Luke* ii. 46.

² *Exodus* xx. 5.

³ Solution of continuity. *The destruction of the texture, or cohesion of the parts of an animal body*. 'The solid parts may be contracted by dissolving their continuity.'—*Arbuthnot*.

⁴ 'Lo! in the desert.'

⁵ 'Lo! in the sanctuary.'—*Matt.* xxiv. 26.

⁶ 'Go not out.'

⁷ Propriety. *Peculiar quality; property*.

⁸ Vocation. *Calling; state of life and duties of the embraced profession*. 'That every member of thy holy church in his vocation and ministry.'—*Collect for Good Friday*.

have a special care of those without) saith, 'If a heathen come in, and hear you speak with several tongues, will he not say that you are mad?'¹ and certainly it is little better: when atheists and profane persons do hear of so many discordant and contrary opinions in religion, it doth avert² them from the Church, and maketh them 'to sit down in the chair of the scorers.'

It is but a light thing to be vouched in so serious a matter, but yet it expresseth well the deformity; there is a master of scoffing, that in his catalogue of books of a feigned library, sets down this title of a book, *The Morris Dance of Heretics*:³ for, indeed, every sect of them hath a diverse⁴ posture, or cringe,⁵ by themselves, which cannot but move derision in worldlings and depraved politics,⁶ who are apt to condemn holy things.

As for the fruit towards those that are within, it is peace, which containeth infinite blessings; it establisheth faith; it kindleth charity; the outward peace of the Church distilleth into peace of conscience, and it turneth the labours of writing and reading controversies into treatises of mortification⁷ and devotion.

Concerning the bonds of unity, the true placing of them importeth⁸ exceedingly. There appear to be two extremes; for to certain zealots all speech of pacification is odious. 'Is it peace, Jehu?' 'What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 23.

² Avert. *To repel; to turn away.* 'Even cut themselves off from all opportunities of proselytizing others by averting them from their company.'—Venn.

³ Rabelais. *Pantag.* ii. 7.

⁴ Diverse. *Different.* 'Four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.'—Daniel vii. 3.

⁵ Cringe. *A bow.* Seldom used as a substantive.

'Far from me

Be fawning *cringe*, and false dissembling looks.'—Phillips.

'He is the new court-god, and well applies

With sacrifice of knees, of crooks, and *cringe*.'—Ben Jonson.

⁶ Politics. *Politicians.* 'That which time-servers and *politics* do for earthly advantages, we will do for spiritual.'—Bishop Hall.

⁷ Mortification. *The subduing of sinful propensities.* (Our modern use never occurs in Scripture, where the word always means 'to put to death.') 'You see no real *mortification*, or self-denial, or eminent charity in the common lives of Christians.'—Lave.

⁸ Import. *To be of weight or consequence.*

'What else more serious

Importeth thee to know—this bears.'—Shakespeare.

behind me.’¹ Peace is not the matter, but following and party. Contrariwise, certain Laodiceans and lukewarm persons think they may accommodate² points of religion by middle ways, and taking part of both, and witty³ reconcilements, as if they would make an arbitrement⁴ between God and man. Both these extremes are to be avoided ; which will be done if the league of Christians, penned by our Saviour Himself, were in the two cross clauses thereof soundly and plainly expounded : ‘ He that is not with us is against us ;’ and again, ‘ He that is not against us is with us ;’ that is, if the points fundamental, and of substance in religion, were truly discerned and distinguished from points not merely⁵ of faith, but of opinion, order, or good intention. This is a thing may seem to many a matter trivial, and done already ; but if it were done less partially, it would be embraced more generally.

Of this I may give only this advice, according to my small model. Men ought to take heed of rending God’s Church by two kinds of controversies ; the one is, when the matter of the point controverted is too small and light, nor worth the heat and strife about it, kindled only by contradiction ; for, as it is noted by one of the fathers, Christ’s coat indeed had no seam, but the Church’s vesture was of divers colours ; whereupon he saith, ‘ In veste varietas sit, scissura non sit,’⁶—they be two things, unity, and uniformity ; the other is, when the matter of the point controverted is great, but it is driven to an over-great subtilty and obscurity, so that it becometh a thing rather ingenious than substantial. A man that is of judgment and understanding shall sometimes hear ignorant men differ, and know well within himself that those which so differ mean one thing, and yet they themselves would never agree : and if it come so to pass in that

¹ 1 Kings ix. 13.

² Accommodate. *To reconcile what seems inconsistent.* ‘ Part know how to accommodate St. James and St. Paul better than some late reconcilers.’—Norris.

³ Witty. *Ingenious ; inventive.*

‘ The deep-revolving witty Buckingham.’—Shakespeare.

⁴ Arbitrement. *Final decision ; judgment.*

‘ We of the offending side

Must keep aloof from strict arbitrements.’—Shakespeare.

⁵ Merely. *Absolutely ; purely ; unreservedly* (from the Latin *merus*).

‘ We are merely cheated of our lives by drunkards.’—Shakespeare.

⁶ ‘ Let there be variety in the robe, but let there be no rent.’

distance of judgment which is between man and man, shall we not think that God above, that knows the heart, doth not discern that frail men, in some of their contradictions, intend the same thing, and accepteth¹ of both? The nature of such controversies is excellently expressed by St. Paul, in the warning and precept that he giveth concerning the same, ‘Devita profanas vocum novitates et oppositiones falsi nominis scientiæ.’² Men create oppositions which are not, and put them into new terms so fixed; as³ whereas the meaning ought to govern the term, the term in effect governeth the meaning.

There be also two false peaces, or unities: the one, when the peace is grounded but upon an implicit ignorance; for all colours will agree in the dark: the other, when it is pieced up upon a direct admission of contraries in fundamental points; for truth and falsehood in such things are like the iron and clay in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s image⁴—they may cleave but they will not incorporate.

Concerning the means of procuring unity, men must beware, that in the procuring or muniting⁵ of religious unity, they do not dissolve and deface the laws of charity and of human society. There be two swords amongst Christians, the spiritual and the temporal, and both have their due office and place in the maintenance of religion; but we may not take up the third sword, which is Mahomet’s sword, or like unto it—that is, to propagate religion by wars, or by sanguinary persecutions to force consciences—except it be in cases of overt scandal, blasphemy, or intermixture of practice against the state; much less to nourish seditions; to authorise conspiracies and rebellions; to put the sword into the people’s hands, and the like, tending to the subversion of all government, which is the ordinance of God;

¹ Accept of. *To approve; receive favourably.* ‘I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, . . . peradventure he will *accept of* me.’—*Gen.* xxxii.

² ‘Avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.’—*1 Tim.* vi. 20.

³ As. *That (denoting consequence).* ‘The mariners were so conquered by the storm as they thought it best with stricken sails to yield to be governed by it.’—*Sidney.*

⁴ *Daniel* ii. 33.

⁵ Muniting. *The defending; fortifying.* ‘By protracting of tyme, King Henry might fortify and *munite* all dangerous places and passages.’—*Hall.* ‘All that fight against her and her *munitions.*’—*Jer.* xxix. 7.

‘The arm our soldier,

Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter,
With other *muniments* and petty helps.’—*Shakespeare.*

for this is but to dash the first table against the second; and so to consider men as Christians, as¹ we forget that they are men. Lucretius the poet, when he beheld the act of Agamemnon, that could endure the sacrificing of his own daughter, exclaimed:—

‘Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.’²

What would he have said, if he had known of the massacre in France, or the powder treason of England? He would have been seven times more epicure³ and atheist than he was; for as the temporal sword is to be drawn with great circumspection in cases of religion, so it is a thing monstrous to put it into the hands of the common people; let that be left to the anabaptists and other furies. It was great blasphemy when the devil said, ‘I will ascend and be like the Highest;’⁴ but it is greater blasphemy to personate God, and bring him in saying, ‘I will descend and be like the prince of darkness;’ and what is it better, to make the cause of religion to descend to the cruel and execrable actions of murdering princes, butchery of people, and subversion of states and governments? Surely this is to bring down the Holy Ghost, instead of the likeness of a dove, in the shape of a vulture or raven; and to set out of the bark of a christian Church, a flag of a bark of pirates and assassins: therefore it is most necessary that the Church, by doctrine and decree, princes by their sword, and all learning, both christian and moral, as by their mercury rod to damn and send to hell for ever, those facts and opinions tending to the support of the same, as hath been already in good part done. Surely in councils concerning religion, that counsel of the Apostle should be prefixed, ‘Ira hominis non implet justitiam Dei;’⁵ and it was a notable observation of a wise father, and no less ingenuously confessed, that those which held and persuaded⁶ pressure of consciences, were commonly interested therein themselves for their own ends.

¹ As. *That*. See page 26.

² ‘So many evils could religion induce.’—*Lucret.* i. 95.

³ Epicure. *Epicurean; a follower of Epicurus*. ‘Here he describeth the fury of the *Epicures*, which is the highest and deepest mischief of all; even to contempne the very God.’

⁴ *Isaiah* xiv. 14.

⁵ ‘The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.’—*James* i. 20.

⁶ Persuade. *To inculcate*. ‘To children afraid of vain images, we *persuade* confidence by making them handle and look near such things.’—*Bishop Taylor*.

ANNOTATIONS.

*'It is a happy thing when Religion is well contained within the true bond of unity.'*¹

It is, therefore, very important to have a clear notion of the nature of the christian unity spoken of in the Scriptures, and to understand in what this 'true bond of unity' consists, so often alluded to and earnestly dwelt on by our Sacred Writers. The unity they speak of does not mean *agreement in doctrine*, nor yet concord and mutual good will ; though these are strongly insisted on by the Apostles. Nor, again, does it mean that all Christians belong, or ought to belong, to some *one society on earth*. This is what the Apostles never aimed at, and what never was actually the state of things, from the time that the christian religion extended beyond the city of Jerusalem. The Church is undoubtedly *one*, and so is the human race *one* ; but not as a society or community, for, as such, it is only *one* when considered as to its future existence.² The teaching of Scripture clearly is, that believers on earth are part of a great society (church or congregation), of which the Head is in heaven, and of which many of the members only 'live unto God,' or exist in his counsels,—some having long since departed, and some being not yet born. The universal Church of Christ may therefore be said to be ONE in reference to HIM, its supreme Head in *heaven* ; but it is not *one community* on earth. And even so the human race is *one* in respect of the *One Creator and Governor* ; but this does not make it *one family* or *one state*. And though all men are bound to live in *peace*, and to be kindly disposed towards every fellow-creature, and all bound to *agree* in thinking and doing whatever is right, yet they are not at all bound to live under one *single government*, extending over the whole world. Nor, again, are all nations bound to have the same form of government, regal or republican, &c. That is a matter left to their discretion. But all are bound to do their best to promote the great *objects* for which all government is instituted,—good order, justice, and public prosperity.

¹ Great part of what follows is extracted from a Charge of some years back.

² See Bishop Hinds' *History of the Origin of Christianity*. See also *Cautions for the Times*, No. 2.

And even so the Apostles founded christian Churches, all based on the same principles, all sharing common privileges,—‘One Lord, one faith, one baptism,’—and all having the same object in view, but all quite independent of each other. And while, by the inspiration of Him who knew what was in Man, they delineated those christian principles which Man could not have devised for himself, each Church has been left, by the same divine foresight, to make the application of those principles in its symbols, its forms of worship, and its ecclesiastical regulations; and, while steering its course by the chart and compass which his holy Word supplies, to regulate for itself the sails and rudder, according to the winds and currents it may meet with.

Now, I have little doubt that the sort of variation resulting from this independence and freedom, so far from breaking the bond, is the best preservative of it. A number of neighbouring families, living in perfect unity, will be thrown into discord as soon as you compel them to form one family, and to observe in things intrinsically indifferent, the same rules. One, for instance, likes early hours, and another late; one likes the windows open, and another shut; and thus, by being brought too close together, they are driven into ill-will, by one being perpetually forced to give way to another. Of this character were the disputations which arose (though they subsequently assumed a different character) about church-music, the posture of the communicants, the colours of a minister’s dress, the time of keeping Easter, &c.

This independence of each Church is not to be confounded with the error of leaving too much to individual discretion of the minister or members of each Church. To have absolutely no terms of communion at all,—no tests of the fitness of any one to be received as a member, or a member of each Church respectively,—would be to renounce entirely the character of a christian Church; since of such a body it is plain that a Jew, a Polytheist, or an Atheist might, quite as consistently as a Christian, be a member, or even a governor. And though the Scriptures, and the Scriptures only, are to be appealed to for a decision on questions of doctrine, yet to have (as some have wildly proposed) no test of communion but the very words of Scripture, would be scarcely less extravagant than having no

test at all, since there is no one professing Christianity who does not maintain that his sentiments are in accordance with the true meaning of Scripture, however absurd or pernicious these sentiments may really be. For it is notorious that Scripture itself is at least as liable as human formularies (and indeed more so) to have forced interpretations put on its language.

Accordingly, there is no christian community which does not, in some way or other, apply some other test besides the very words of Scripture. Some churches, indeed, do not reduce any such test to writing, or express it in any *fixed* form, so as to enable every one to know beforehand precisely how much he will be required to bind himself to. But, nevertheless, these Churches do apply a test, and very often a much more stringent, elaborate, and minute test than our *Liturgy* and *Articles*. In such communities, the candidate-pastor of a congregation is not, to be sure, called on to subscribe in writing a definite confession of faith, drawn up by learned and pious persons after mature deliberation, and publicly set forth by common authority,—but he is called upon to converse with the leading members of the congregation, and satisfy them as to the soundness of his views; not, of course, by merely repeating texts of Scripture—which a man of any views might do, and do honestly; but by explaining *the sense* in which he understands the Scriptures. Thus, instead of subscribing the *Thirty-nine Articles*, he subscribes the sentiments of the leading members—for the time being—of that particular congregation over which he is to be placed as teacher.¹

And thus it is that tests of some kind or other, written or unwritten (that is, transmitted by oral tradition), fixed for the whole Body, or variable, according to the discretion of particular governors, are, and must be, used in every christian Church. This is doing no more than is evidently allowable and expedient. But it is quite otherwise when any Church, by an unwarrantable assumption, requires *all* who would claim

¹ *Cautions for the Times*, p. 451. I have known, accordingly, a minister of a continental Protestant Church strongly object to all subscriptions to Articles, saying, that a man should only be called on to profess his belief in Jesus Christ; and yet, a few minutes afterwards, denouncing as a 'Rationalist' another Protestant minister.

the christian name to assent to her doctrines and conform to her worship, whether they approve of them or not,—to renounce all exercise of their own judgment, and to profess belief in whatever the Church has received or may hereafter receive.

‘The religion of the heathen consisted rather in rites and ceremonies than in any constant religious’ belief. . . . But the true God hath this attribute,’ &c.

Bacon here notices the characteristic that distinguishes the christian religion from the religion of the heathen. The religion of the heathen not only was not true, but was not even supported as true; it not only deserved no belief, but it demanded none. The very pretension to truth—the very demand of faith—were characteristic distinctions of Christianity. It is truth resting on evidence, and requiring belief in it, on the ground of its truth. The first object, therefore, of the adherents of such a religion must be that Truth which its divine Author pointed out as defining the very nature of his kingdom, of his objects, and of his claims. ‘For this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.’¹ And if Truth could be universally attained, Unity would be attained also, since Truth is one. On the other hand, Unity may conceivably be attained by agreement in error; so that while by the universal adoption of a right faith, unity would be secured, incidentally, the attainment of unity would be no security for truth.

It is in relation to the paramount claim of truth that the view we have given of the real meaning of Church Unity in Scripture is of so much importance; for, the mistake of representing it as consisting in having one community on earth, to which all Christians belong, or ought to belong, and to whose government all are bound to submit, has led to truth being made the secondary, and not the paramount, object.²

What the Romanist means by renouncing ‘private judgment’ and adhering to the decisions of the Church, is, substantially, what many Protestants express by saying, ‘We make *truth* the first and paramount object, and the others, *unity*.’ The two

¹ John xviii. 37.

² See *Charge on the Claims of Truth and of Unity*.

expressions, when rightly understood, denote the same; but they each require some explanation to prevent their being understood incorrectly, and even unfairly.

A Roman Catholic does exercise private judgment, once for all, if (not through carelessness, but on earnest and solemn deliberation) he resolves to place himself completely under the guidance of that Church (as represented by his priest) which he *judges* to have been divinely appointed for that purpose. And in so doing he considers himself, not as manifesting indifference about truth, but as taking the way by which he will attain either complete and universal religious truth, or at least a greater amount of it than could have been attained otherwise. To speak of such a person as indifferent about truth, would be not only uncharitable, but also as unreasonable as to suppose a man indifferent about his health, or about his property, because, distrusting his own judgment on points of medicine or of law, he places himself under the direction of those whom he has judged to be the most trustworthy physician and lawyer.

On the other hand a Protestant, in advocating private judgment, does not, as some have represented, necessarily maintain that every man should set himself to study and interpret for himself the Scriptures (which, we should recollect, are written in the Hebrew and Greek languages), without seeking or accepting aid from any instructors, whether under the title of translators (for a *translator*, who claims no inspiration, is, manifestly, a human *instructor* of the people as to the sense of Scripture), or whether called commentators, preachers, or by whatever other name. Indeed, considering the multitude of tracts, commentaries, expositions, and discourses of various forms, that have been put forth and assiduously circulated by Protestants of all denominations, for the avowed purpose (be it well or ill executed) of giving religious instruction, it is really strange that such an interpretation as I have alluded to should ever have been put on the phrase 'private judgment.' For, to advert to a parallel case of daily occurrence, all would recommend a student of mathematics, for instance, or of any branch of natural philosophy, to seek the aid of a well-qualified professor or tutor. And yet he would be thought to have studied in vain, if he should ever think of taking *on trust* any mathematical or physical truth on the word of his instructors. It is,

on the contrary, their part to *teach him how*—by demonstration or by experiment—to verify each point for himself.

On the other hand, the adherents of a Church claiming to be infallible on all essential points, and who, consequently, profess to renounce private judgment, these (besides that, as has been just said, they cannot but judge for themselves as to *one* point—that very claim itself) have also room for the exercise of judgment, and often do exercise it, on questions as to *what* points *are* essential, and for which, consequently, infallible rectitude is insured. Thus the Jansenists, when certain doctrines were pronounced heretical by the Court of Rome, which condemned Jansenius for maintaining them, admitted, as in duty bound, the decision that they *were* heretical, but denied that they were implied in Jansenius's writings; and of this latter point the Pope, they said, was no more qualified or authorized to decide than any other man. And we should be greatly mistaken if we were to assume that all who have opposed what we are accustomed to call '*the Reformation*' were satisfied that there was nothing in their Church that needed reform, or were necessarily indifferent about the removal of abuses. We know that, on the contrary, many of them pointed out and complained of, and studied to have remedied, sundry corruptions that had crept into their Church, and which were, in many instances, sanctioned by its highest authorities.

Sincere, one must suppose, and strong, must have been the conviction of several who both did and suffered much in labouring after such remedy. And it would be absurd, as well as uncharitable, to take for granted that Erasmus, for instance, and, still more, Pascal and all the Jansenists, were withheld merely by personal fear, or other personal motives, from revolting against the Church of Rome. But they conceived, no doubt, that what they considered Church-Unity was to be preserved at *any* cost; that a *separation* from what they regarded as the Catholic (or Universal) Church, was a greater evil than all others combined. If, without loss of unity, they could succeed in removing any of those other evils, for such a reform they would gladly labour. But, if not, to *Unity* anything and everything was to be sacrificed.

Such seems to have been the sentiment of a Roman-catholic priest, apparently a man of great simplicity of character, who,

about three or four years ago, had interviews, at his own desire, with several of our bishops. He spoke very strongly of the unseemly and lamentable spectacle (and who could not but agree with him in thinking it?) of disunion and contention among Christ's professed followers; and he dwelt much upon the duty of earnestly praying and striving for unity.

In reference to this point, it was thought needful to remind him, that two parties, while apparently agreeing in their prayers and endeavours for unity, might possibly mean by it different things; the one understanding by it the submission of all Christians to the government of one single ecclesiastical *community on earth*; the other, merely mutual kindness, and agreement in faith. Several passages of Scripture were pointed out to him, tending to prove that the Churches founded by the Apostles were all quite independent of each other, or of any one central Body. To one among the many passages which go to prove this, I directed his especial attention; that in which Paul's final interview (as he believed it) with the elders of Miletus and Ephesus is recorded (*Acts xx.*). Foreseeing the dangers to which they would be exposed, even from false teachers amongst themselves, and of which he had been earnestly warning them for three years, it is inconceivable that he should not have directed them to Peter or his successors at Rome or elsewhere, if he had known of any central supreme Church, provided as an infallible guide, to whose decisions they might safely refer when doubts or disputes should arise. It follows therefore inevitably that he knew of none. But all Christians were exhorted to 'keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.' Such unity, the applicant was reminded (for he was formerly a minister of our Church), is the subject of a special petition in our *Prayer for all Conditions of Men*, and in several others.

It was remarked to him, that Truth has a paramount claim to be the first object; and that since Truth is one, all who reach Truth will reach Unity; but that men may, and often do, gain Unity without Truth.

He was reminded, moreover, that agreement among Christians, though an object we should wish for, and endeavour by all allowable means to promote, must, after all, depend on *others* as much as on ourselves; and our endeavour may be completely defeated through their fault: whereas truth is a benefit

—and a benefit of the first importance—to those who receive it themselves, even though they should have to lament its rejection by many others.

And it was pointed out to him, that to pray and strive for truth, and to be ever open to conviction, does not (as he seemed to imagine) imply a *wavering* faith, and an anticipation of change. When any one prints from *moveable types*, this does not imply that he has committed, or that he suspects, typographical errors, any more than if he had employed an *engraved plate*. The types are not moveable in the sense of being *loose* and liable to casual change. He may be challenging all the world to point out an error, showing that any *can* be corrected if they do detect one; though, perhaps, he is fully convinced that there are none.

He was, in conclusion, reminded that ‘no man can serve two masters;’ not because they are necessarily *opposed*, but because they are not necessarily combined, and cases may arise in which the one must give way to the other. There is no necessary opposition even between ‘God and Mammon,’ if by ‘Mammon’ we understand worldly prosperity. For it will commonly happen that a man will thrive the better in the world from the honesty, frugality, and temperance which he may be practising from higher motives. And there is not even anything necessarily wrong in aiming at temporal advantages. But whoever is resolved on obtaining wealth in one way or another (‘*si possis, recte; si non, quocunque modo, rem*’) will occasionally be led to violate duty; and he, again, who is fully bent on ‘seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,’ will sometimes find himself called on to incur temporal losses. And so it is with the occasionally rival claims of Truth, and of Unity, or of any two objects which may possibly be, in some instance, opposed. We must make up our minds which is, in that case, to give way. One must be the supreme,—must be the ‘master.’

‘Either he will love the one and hate the other.’ This seems to refer to cases in which a radical opposition between the two does exist: ‘or else he will cleave to the one, and despise (*i.e.* disregard and neglect) the other.’ This latter seems to be the description of those cases in which there is no such necessary opposition; only, that cases will

sometimes arise, in which the one or the other must be disregarded.

'When Atheists and profane persons do hear of so many and contrary opinions in religion, it doth avert them from the Church.'

One may meet with persons, not a few, who represent religious differences as, properly speaking, *designed* by the Most High, and acceptable to Him. (See the extract from the tragedy of *Tamerlane* in the Annotations on Essay XVI.)

Thus, in a very popular children's book (and such books often make an impression which is, unconsciously, retained through life), there is a short tale of a father exhibiting to his son the diversities of worship among Christians of different denominations, and afterwards their uniting to aid a distressed neighbour. The one, he tells the child, is 'a thing in which men are born to differ; and the other, one in which they are born to agree.' Now it is true that persons of different persuasions may, and often do, agree in practising the duties of humanity. But that they do not often differ, and differ very widely, not only in their actual *conduct*, but in their *principles* of conduct, is notoriously untrue. The writer of the tale must have overlooked (or else meant his readers to overlook) the cruel abominations of Paganism, ancient and modern,—the human sacrifices offered by some Pagans—the widow-burning and other atrocities of the Hindus; and (to come to the case of professed Christians) the 'holy wars' against the Huguenots and the Vaudois, the Inquisition, and all the other instances of persecution practised as a point of christian duty. Certainly, in whatever sense it is true that men are 'born to differ' in religion, in the same sense it is true that they are 'born to differ' in their moral practice as enjoined by their religion.

Somewhat to the same purpose writes the author of an able article in the *Edinburgh Review*, and also of an article on this volume, in the *North British* (Aug. 1857, p. 6), with whom I partly agree and partly not.

This writer maintains (1) that all, or nearly all, the divisions that have existed among Christians relate to points of a profoundly mysterious, and *purely speculative* character.

(2.) That on these points the language of Scripture is so obscure or ambiguous, that we must infer the Author of the revelation to have *designed* that it should receive different interpretations; while, on all matters of practical morality, the language is too plain to admit of doubt or difference of opinion.

(3.) That the dissent and schisms arising from diversity of interpretations of Scripture are on the whole beneficial; because, the union of great masses of men in one community does not tend to their improvement, but the contrary.

(4.) That the inexpediency of persecution may be demonstrated by an argument of universal application,—one to which a Mahometan or a Pagan must yield, as well as a Roman Catholic or a Protestant; namely, the impossibility of demonstrating that what is persecuted is really error.

With all this, as I have said, I partly concur, and partly not.

(I.) It is very true, and is a truth which I have most earnestly dwelt on in many publications, that what is *practical* in the christian revelation is clearly, and fully, and frequently set forth; and that, on matters more of a speculative character, we find in Scripture only slight and obscure hints.¹

But nevertheless it cannot be admitted that no passages of a practical character have been variously interpreted; or that all, or nearly all, or all the most important, of the differences that have divided Christians, relate to questions purely speculative. Take, as one instance, that very early and very widespread heresy, of the Gnostics; most of whom were rank Antinomians, teaching that they, as ‘knowing the Gospel’—(whence their name),—were exempt from all moral duty, and would be accounted righteous by imputation, without ‘doing righteousness.’²

These, John in his Epistles manifestly had in view; and no doubt Peter also, when he speaks of those who ‘wrest the Scriptures,’ especially Paul’s Epistles, ‘to their own destruction.’ They, doubtless, as well as their successors (for, under various names Antinomians have always arisen from time to

¹ This circumstance is pointed out as characteristic of our religion, in the Essay (1st Series) on the ‘Practical Character of Revelation,’ and also in the *Lectures on a Future State*.

² See *John*, Epis. i.

time, down to this day¹), interpreted in their own way Paul's doctrine that we are 'justified by faith, without the works of the law.' Considering how earnestly that Apostle dwells on the necessity of 'denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly and righteously,' it may seem very strange that his language should have been thus 'wrested;' and that he should have been thought to be speaking of himself individually, in his then-state, as being 'carnal, sold under sin,' when he had just before been congratulating his hearers on being 'made free from sin,' and just after, speaks of his walking 'not after the flesh, but after the spirit.'²

But the fact, however strange, cannot be denied. And it is as to the matter of *fact* that the question now is. For if it be said that such and such passages are not 'susceptible of various interpretations' according to *reasonable principles*, this is what most of the contending parties will be disposed to say, each, of the texts they appeal to. They usually maintain, that to a *fair and intelligent* judge they do *not* admit of any interpretation but that which they themselves adopt. We can only reply, that, in point of *fact* they *have* been variously interpreted. It is probable, indeed, that, in very many instances, the various interpretations of Scripture have been not the *cause*, but the *effect* of men's differences; and that, having framed certain theories according to their own inclinations or fancies, they have then sought to force Scripture into a support of these. But still the fact remains, that men have differed in their interpretations of Scripture, on the most important *practical* questions.

Again, those Anabaptists who taught community of goods, and who were thus striking at the root of all civil society, made their appeal to Scripture.³ So also do those who teach the doctrine of complete non-resistance; the consequence of which, if adopted by any one nation, would be to give up the peaceable as a prey to their unscrupulous neighbours. And so again do those who advocate vows of celibacy.⁴

The same may be said of the very principle itself of *persecution*. The supposed duty (above alluded to) of putting down

¹ See *Cautions for the Times*, No. 26.

² *Rom.* viii.

³ *Acts* iv., xix., *Matt.* xxiv., and *Mark* x. 21. ⁴ *Matt.* xix. 12, and *1 Cor.* vii.

false doctrine by the sword, or of excluding men from civil rights on the ground of their religious opinions, has been inculcated on Scripture-authority, not only by Romanists but by Protestants also. Now this is surely a matter which 'comes home to men's business and bosoms : ' so that the very question the Reviewer is occupied on—that of toleration or non-toleration—turns out to be a religious question, most emphatically of a practical character, and on which men have disagreed.

Far from correct therefore is the observation made in a very able Article (I believe by the same Writer) on Charles the Fifth, in the *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1855 (p. 91), that 'purely speculative questions are precisely those which have been most furiously debated. They have created more hatred, more bloodshed, more wars, and more persecution than all practical questions put together.' The Writer forgets that one of the chief 'practical questions' is, the very one, whether religious wars and persecutions are acceptable or odious in God's sight.

Again, the Scripture-exhortations to 'unity' have been interpreted by some as requiring all Christians to live under a single ecclesiastical government; and the passages relating to the Church,¹ and to the powers conferred on the Apostles, as obliging us to renounce all private judgment, and submit implicitly to whatever is decreed by the (supposed) Catholic Church. Now this is most emphatically a practical question, since it involves, not this or that particular point of practice, but an indefinite number. Those who adopt the above interpretations must be prepared to acquiesce, at the bidding of their ecclesiastical rulers, in *any* the most gross superstitions and the most revolting moral corruptions, however disapproved by their own judgment, rather than exclude themselves (as they think) altogether from the Gospel-covenant.

And the difference between Christians as to this point, which for so many ages has divided so many millions, may be considered as not only the most important of all the divisions that have ever existed, but even greater than all the rest put together.

¹ *Matt.* xvi. 18, and xviii. 17.

It cannot, therefore, be admitted that the practical precepts of Scripture have never admitted of various interpretations; or that the questions of doctrine on which Christians have been opposed are of a purely speculative character.

The difference, again, between the Christians and the unbelieving Jews, which is, emphatically, on a practical point, turns on the interpretations of the Scripture-prophecies; which the Jews of old (as at this day also) interpreted as relating to a Messiah who should be a great temporal prince and deliverer. And it was on that ground that they put to death the Lord Jesus as a blasphemous impostor. Indeed, a modern writer (speaking, we may presume, in bitter irony, and meaning a scoff at Christians) represents that murder as '*no crime*,' because by the sacrifice of Christ mankind were redeemed.

However clear to *us* may be the prophecies of a suffering Messiah, it cannot be said, looking to the *fact*, that 'they admit of no differences of interpretation.' And it is conceivable that they *might* have been so expressed as to force all men into the reception of Jesus; if, at least, there had been also such 'signs from Heaven' as they looked for;—if, that is, He had been seen descending from the clouds, accompanied by Moses and Elias, in the splendour which He displayed to three Apostles at the Transfiguration;—and if He had always appeared surrounded by a supernatural light (called a GLORY) as painters are accustomed to represent Him, and as he appeared to John the Baptist.

But as it is, 'because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath day, they fulfilled them in condemning Him.'¹

(II.) I most fully admit that, in things confessedly beyond human reason, we ought to acquiesce in the scanty and obscure intimations given us in Revelation; not presuming to frame, on such points, explanations of what Scripture has left unexplained; nor (much less) to condemn, as unhappily has so often been done, our fellow-Christians who may reject those explanations; and on such grounds to create hostile separation.

But it is surely rash to pronounce that such separations were, properly speaking, *designed*; or, on any point, to draw inferences

¹ Acts xiii. 27.

as to the Divine WILL from conjectures of our own, based on the events that actually take place. For, in a certain sense, it may be said that whatever happens must be according to the Will of the Most High, since He does not interpose to prevent it. But 'in our doings' (as is expressed in the 17th Article) 'that Will of God is to be followed which is expressly declared in Scripture.'

'It must needs be,' says our Lord, 'that offences come; but woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh.' And Paul, who tells his converts, that 'there must be heresies, that they who are approved may be made manifest,' bids them, nevertheless, 'reject a man that is an heretic.'

As for the analogy of a prince or master who, the reviewer says, always endeavours to give unmistakeable directions, Bishop Butler has touched it very well when he says,¹ 'The reason why a prince would give his directions in this plain manner is, that he absolutely desires such an *external action* should be *done*, without concerning himself with the motive or principle on which it is done; *i.e.*, he regards only the external event, or the thing's being *done*, and not at all the *doing* it, or the action. Whereas, the whole of morality and religion consisting merely in *action* itself, there is no sort of parallel between the cases. But if the prince be supposed to regard only the action, —*i.e.*, only to desire to exercise, or in any way prove, the understanding or loyalty of a servant, he would not always give his orders in such a plain manner.'

But as for the question why a state of trial does exist—why earth is not heaven—why any evil is permitted in the universe, —Bishop Butler had too much sense and modesty to attempt any solution.

(III.) I fully concur with the reviewer in disapproving of the union of vast masses of mankind under one government, ecclesiastical or civil. And in some instances, where men were so wedded to the erroneous view above alluded to, of the character of christian 'unity,' as to think that the combining of all Christians in a single community on earth is a thing to be aimed at, their doctrinal disagreements, which prevented this, may have incidentally proved a benefit. But it is a mistake

¹ *Analogy*, part ii. chap. vi. p. 247, Fitzgerald's edition.

to suppose that there is no alternative but such a *combination*, or else, hostile separation and *opposition*. Considering, indeed, how many religious Bodies of Dissenters there are among us, and that all Protestants are *dissenters* from the Church of Rome—revolted subjects who have renounced their subjection,—it is not, perhaps, to be wondered that the two ideas, of independent *distinctness*, and of *disagreement*, which have no necessary connexion, should have become associated in men's minds.¹ But the Apostles, who certainly did not encourage diversities of doctrine, founded numerous distinct Churches, several even in the same province; which, though not at all at variance, were not placed under any common authority on earth, except that of the individual Apostle who founded them. And in the earliest ages the christian Churches were reckoned by hundreds. It was in later times, and very gradually, that the claims of Rome, and of Constantinople, to universal supremacy, were admitted.

And in the present day, the American Episcopalian Church is kept apart from our own, not by difference of doctrine, but simply by being American. The Churches of Sweden and of Denmark, again, and of some other Protestant States, are not, I believe, at all *at variance* with each other, though not subject to any common government.

(IV.) I am as fully convinced as the reviewer that no uninspired man can justly pretend to infallible certainty as to what opinions are erroneous. But (1) no argument drawn from man's fallibility can at all avail to repress persecution, except with those who *acknowledge* fallibility. And it is well known that Churches comprising a majority of the christian world do lay claim to an unerring certainty in matters of doctrine. So that, with them, the argument which it is alleged all must admit, would have no force at all. To tell a Roman Catholic to admit that his Church can have no certainty as to what is or is not an error, would be simply telling him to *cease to be* a Roman Catholic.

If, however, all that is meant is that, however certain we may be, ourselves, we cannot always demonstrate to *others*—to the very persons in error—that their opinions *are* wrong, the

¹ I have treated fully of this point in the *Lessons on Religious Worship*, lesson x.

persecutor would answer that since he cannot convince them, he must be content to make sure, in some way, whether by their death, banishment, incarceration, or otherwise, that they shall be effectually prevented from *propagating* their errors.

But (2) even if a ruler admits himself to be not completely infallible, still the above argument will not preclude persecution. As I observed in a former work,¹ 'In protesting against the claim of the civil magistrate to prescribe to his subjects what shall be their religious faith, I have confined myself to the consideration that such a decision is *beyond the province* of a secular ruler; instead of dilating, as some writers have done, on the impossibility of having any ruler whose judgment shall be *infallible*. That infallibility cannot be justly claimed by uninspired Man, is indeed very true, but nothing to the present purpose. A man may claim—as the Apostles did—infallibility in matters of faith, without thinking it allowable to enforce conformity by secular coercion; and, again, on the other hand, he may think it right to employ that coercion, without thinking himself infallible. In fact, *all* legislators do this in respect of temporal concerns; such as confessedly come within the province of human legislation. Much as we have heard of *religious* infallibility, no one, I conceive, ever pretended to universal *legislative* infallibility. And yet every legislature enforces obedience, under penalties, to the laws it enacts in civil and criminal transactions; not, on the ground of their supposing themselves exempt from error of judgment; but because they are bound to legislate—though conscious of being fallible—according to the best of their judgment; and to enforce obedience to each law till they shall see cause to repeal it. What should hinder them, if religion be one of the things coming within their province, from enforcing (on the same principle) conformity to their enactments respecting that? A lawgiver sees the expediency of a uniform rule, with regard, suppose, to weights and measures, or to the descent of property; he frames, without any pretensions to infallibility, the *best* rule he can think of; or, perhaps, merely a rule which he thinks as good as any other; and enforces uniform compliance with it: this being a matter confessedly within his province. Now if reli-

¹ *Essays on the Dangers to Christian Faith*, essay v. § 11. Third edition.

gion be so too, he may feel himself called on to enforce uniformity in that also; not believing himself infallible either in matters of faith or in matters of expediency; but holding himself bound, in each case alike, to frame such enactments as are in his judgment advisable, and to enforce compliance with them; as King James in his prefatory proclamation respecting the Thirty-nine Articles, announces his determination to allow of 'no departure from them whatever.' I do not conceive that he thought himself gifted with infallibility; but that he saw an advantage in religious *uniformity*, and therefore held himself authorized and bound to enforce it by the power of the secular magistrate. The whole question therefore turns, not on any claim to infallibility, but on the extent of the *province of the civil magistrate*, and of the applicability of legal coercion, or of exclusion from civil rights.'—[pp. 157, 8.]

And it may be added that (as I have elsewhere remarked)¹ a ruler who believed in no religion, as probably was the case with many of the ancient heathen lawgivers, might yet, like them, think the established religion a useful thing to keep the vulgar in awe, and might, on grounds of expediency, enforce conformity.

'It is certain, that heresies and schisms are, of all others, the greatest scandals.'

'Nothing doth so much keep men out of the Church, and drive men out of the Church, as breach of unity.'

If proof of the truth of Bacon's remark were needed, it might be found in the fact, that among the more immediate causes of the stationary, or even receding, condition of the Reformation, for nearly three centuries,—a condition so strangely at variance with the anticipations excited in both friends and foes by its first rapid advance,—the one which has been most frequently remarked upon is the contentions among Protestants; who, soon after the first outbreak of the revolt from Rome, began to expend the chief part of their energies in contests with *each other*; and often showed more zeal, and even fiercer hostility, against rival-Protestants, than against the systems and the principles which they agreed in condemning. The adherents of

¹ See Essay i. *On the Kingdom of Christ.*

the Church of Rome, on the contrary, are ready to waive all internal differences, and unite actively, as against a common enemy, in opposing the Greek Church, and all denominations of Protestants. They are like a disciplined army under a single supreme leader ; in which, whatever jealousies and dissensions may exist among the individual officers and soldiers, every one is at his post whenever the trumpet gives the call to arms, and the whole act as one man against the hostile army. Protestants, on the contrary, labour under the disadvantages which are well known in military history, of an *allied* army—a host of *confederates*,—who are often found to forget the common cause, and desert, or even oppose one another.

Hence, it is continually urged against the Reformed Churches, ‘ See what comes of allowing private judgment in religion. Protestants, who profess to sacrifice everything to truth, do not, after all, attain it, for if they did, they would all (as has been just observed) be *agreed*. The exercise of their private judgment does but expose them to the disadvantages of divisions, without, after all, securing to them an infallible certainty of attaining truth ; while those who submit to the decisions of one supreme central authority, have at least the advantage of being united against every common adversary.’

And this advantage certainly does exist, and ought not to be denied, or kept out of sight. The principle is indeed sound, of making truth, as embraced on sincere conviction, the first object, and unity a secondary one ; and if man were a less imperfect being than he is, all who adhered to that principle would, as has been said, be agreed and united ; and truth and rectitude would have their natural advantages over their opposites. But as it is, what we generally find, is truth mixed with human error, and genuine religion tainted with an alloy of human weaknesses and prejudices. And this it is that gives a certain degree of advantage to any system—whether in itself true or false—which makes union, and submission to a supreme authority on earth, the first point.

If you exhort men to seek *truth*, and to embrace what, on deliberate examination, they are convinced *is* truth, they may follow this advice, and yet—considering what Man is—may be expected to arrive at different conclusions. But if you exhort them to agree, and with that view, to make a compromise,—

each consenting (like the Roman Triumvirs of old, who sacrificed to each other's enmity their respective friends) to *proscribe* some of their own convictions,—then, if they follow this advice, the end sought will be accomplished.

But surely the advantages, great as they are, of union, are too dearly purchased at such a price; since, besides the possibility that men may be united in what is erroneous and wrong in itself, there is still this additional evil—and this should be remembered above all,—that whatever absolute truth there may be in what is assented to on such a principle, it is not truth *to* those who assent to it not on conviction, but for union's sake. And what is in itself right to be done, is wrong *to* him who does it without the approbation of his own judgment, at the bidding of others, and with a view to their co-operation. On the other hand, the unity—whether among all Christians, or any portion of them—which is the result of their all holding the same truth,—this unity is not the less perfect from its being incidental, and not the primary object aimed at, and to which all else was to be sacrificed. But those who have only incidentally adhered to what is in itself perfectly right, may be themselves wrong; even to a greater degree than those who may have fallen into error on some points, but who are on the whole sincere votaries of truth.

Another disadvantage that is to be weighed against the advantages of an unity based on implicit submission to a certain supreme authority, is that the adherents of such a system are deprived of the character of *witnesses*.

When a man professes, and we are unable to disprove the sincerity of the profession, that he has been, on examination, convinced of the truth of a certain doctrine, he is a *witness* to the force of the reasons which have convinced him. But those who take the contrary course give, in reality, no testimony at all, except to the fact that they have received so and so from their guide. They are like copies of some printed document (whether many or few, makes no difference), struck off from the same types, and which consequently can have no more weight as evidence, than one. So also, the shops supply us with abundance of busts and prints of some eminent man, 'all striking likenesses—of each other.'

If there were but a hundred persons in all the world who

professed to have fully convinced themselves, independently of each other's authority, of the truth of a certain conclusion, and these were men of no more than ordinary ability, their declaration would have incalculably more weight than that of a hundred millions, even though they were the most sagacious and learned men that ever existed, maintaining the opposite conclusion, but having previously resolved to forego all exercise of their own judgment, and to receive implicitly what is dictated to them. For, the testimony (to use a simple and obvious illustration) of even a small number of *eye-witnesses* of any transaction, even though possessing no extraordinary powers of vision, would outweigh that of countless millions who should have resolved to close their eyes, and to receive and retail the report they heard from a single individual.

So important in giving weight to testimony, is the absence of all concert, or suspicion of concert, that probably one of the causes which induced the Apostles, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to found *several* distinct and independent Churches, instead of a single community under one government on earth, was, the increased assurance thus afforded of the doctrines and of the Canon of Scripture received by all. For, it was not—as some have imagined—any General Council or Synod of the Universal Church, that determined what books and what doctrines should be received. No one of the early General Councils did more than declare what *had* been already received by the spontaneous decision of each of many distinct Churches,—which had thus borne, long before, their independent testimony to the books and the doctrines of Christ's inspired servants.

So well is all this understood by crafty controversialists, that they usually endeavour to represent all who chance to agree in maintaining what *they* would oppose, as belonging to some *School*, Party, or Association of some kind, and in some way *combined*, and acting in concert; and this when there is no proof, or shadow of proof, of any such combination, except coincidence of opinion. They are represented (to serve a purpose) as *disciples* of such and such a leader. But 'there are three senses in which men are sometimes called 'disciples' of any other person; (1) *incorrectly*, from their simply maintaining something that he maintains, without any profession or proof of its being *derived* from him. Thus, Augustine was a predesti-

narian, and so was Mahomet ; yet no one supposes that the one derived his belief from the other. It is very common, however, to say of another, that he is an Arian, Athanasian, Socinian, &c., which tends to mislead, unless it is admitted, or can be proved, that he learnt his opinions from this or that master. (2.) When certain persons *avow* that they have *adopted* the views of another, not however on his authority, but from holding them to be agreeable to reason or to Scripture ; as the Platonic, and most other philosophical sects : the Lutherans, Zuinglians, &c. (3.) When, like the disciples of Jesus, and, as it is said, of the Pythagoreans, and the adherents of certain Churches, they profess to receive their system *on the authority* of their master or Church ; to acquiesce in an ‘ipse-dixit ;’ or, to receive all that the Church receives. These three senses should be carefully kept distinct.”

One of the earliest of the assailants of Bishop Hampden’s *Bampton Lectures* (a writer who afterwards seceded openly to Rome) distinctly asserted that Dr. H., Dr. Arnold, Dr. Hinds, Mr. Blanco White, and Archbishop Whately were ‘united in the closest bonds of private friendship, as well as of agreement in doctrine.’ Whether this was a *known* falsehood, or a mere random assertion, thrown out without any knowledge at all about the matter, one cannot decide. But the *fact* is, that Dr. Arnold never had any close intimacy with Dr. Hampden ; and with Dr. Hinds, and Mr. B. White,—he had not so much as a visiting acquaintance !²

Now though the alleged ‘private friendship’—had it existed—would have been nothing in itself blameable, one may easily see the purpose of the fabrication. That purpose evidently was, to impair in some degree the independent testimony of the persons mentioned, as to the points wherein they coincided, by insinuating that they had *conspired* together to found some kind of school or party ; and that, in furtherance of such a plan, they might possibly have been biassed in their several judgments, or have made something of a compromise.

How very probable such a result is, was strikingly shown, shortly after, by the formation of the ‘Tract-party.’ Of the persons who (deliberately and avowedly) combined for the pur-

Eden’s *Theol. Dict.*, Art. ‘Disciples.’

² See Letter on the *Church and the Universities*.

pose of advocating certain principles, some—as they themselves subsequently declared—disapproved of much that was put forth in several of the *Tracts for the Times*, yet thought it best to suppress their disapprobation, and to continue to favour the publication, till the advocacy of unsound views had reached an alarming height.

The ingenuity displayed in many of those Tracts has given currency to doctrines in themselves open to easy refutation ; and the high character for learning of some of the writers, doubtless contributed to their success ; but their being known to have combined together (*'conspired,'* is the term used by one of themselves) for the propagation of certain doctrines agreed upon, took off just so much of the weight of their authority.

And when ministers of the Church of England, and Moravians, and Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Congregationalists, &c., are, all and each, *without any concert*, teaching to their respective congregations certain fundamental christian doctrines, this their concurrence furnishes a strong presumption in favour of those doctrines. Of these religious communities, some coincide on all fundamental points, while others, unhappily, are, on many important points, opposed to each other : but as long as they are independent of each other, their spontaneous coincidence, where they do coincide, gives great weight to their testimony. But if they formally combine together (in an Association, Alliance, Party, or whatever else it may be called), and pledge themselves to each other to propagate these doctrines, the presumption is proportionably weakened.¹

It is very strange, that some persons, not deficient, generally, in good sense, should fail to perceive the consequences of thus setting up what is in reality, though not in name, a new *Church*. Besides that, under a specious appearance of promoting union among Christians, it tends to foster *dis-union* and dissension in each Church, between those who do, and who do not, enrol themselves as members—besides this, the force of the spontaneous and independent testimony of members of distinct Churches, is, in great measure, destroyed, by the unwise means used for strengthening it.

It is important that we should be fully aware, not only of

¹ See *Thoughts on the proposed Evangelical Alliance*.

the advantages which undoubtedly are obtained by this kind of union, but also of its disadvantages; for neither belong exclusively to any particular Church, or other community, but to every kind of Party, Association, Alliance, or by whatever other name it may be called, in which there is an express or understood obligation on the members to give up, or to suppress, their own convictions, and submit to the decisions of the leader or leaders under whom they are to act.

This principle of sacrificing truth to unity, creeps in gradually. The sacrifice *first* demanded, in such cases, is, in general, not a great one. Men are led on, step by step, from silence as to some mistake, to connivance at fallacies, and thence to suppression, and then to misrepresentation, of truth; and ultimately to the support of known falsehood.

It is scarcely necessary to say that I do not advocate the opposite extreme,—the too common practice of exaggerating differences, or setting down all who do not completely concur in all our views as ‘infidels,’ as ‘altogether heterodox,’ &c. The right maxim is one that we may borrow from Shakespere: ‘Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.’ But it is worth remarking, that what may be called the two opposite extremes, in this matter, are generally found *together*. For it is the tendency of party spirit to pardon *anything* in those who heartily support the party, and *nothing* in those who do not.

‘*Men ought to take heed of rending God’s Church by two kinds of controversies.*’

Controversy, though always an evil in itself, is sometimes a necessary evil. To give up anything worth contending about, in order to prevent hurtful contentions, is, for the sake of extirpating noxious weeds, to condemn the field to perpetual sterility. Yet, if the principle that it is an evil only to be incurred when necessary for the sake of some important good, were acted upon, the two classes of controversies mentioned by Bacon would certainly be excluded. The first, controversy on subjects too deep and mysterious, is indeed calculated to gender strife. For, in a case where correct knowledge is impossible to any, and where all are, in fact, in the wrong, there is but little likelihood of agreement; like men who should rashly venture to explore a strange land in utter darkness, they will be scattered

into a thousand devious paths. The second class of subjects that would be excluded by this principle, are those which relate to matters too minute and trifling. For it should be remembered that not only does every question that can be raised lead to differences of opinion, disputes, and parties, but also that the violence of the dispute, and the zeal and bigoted spirit of the party, are not at all proportioned to the importance of the matter at issue. The smallest spark, if thrown among very combustible substances, may raise a formidable conflagration. Witness the long and acrimonious disputes which distracted the Church concerning the proper time for the observance of Easter, and concerning the use of leavened or unleavened bread at the Lord's Supper. We of the present day, viewing these controversies from a distance, with the eye of sober reason, and perceiving of how little consequence the points of dispute are in themselves, provided they be so fixed as to produce a decent uniformity, at least among the members of each Church, can hardly bring ourselves to believe that the most important doctrines of the Gospel were never made the subject of more eager contentions than such trifles as these; and that for these the peace and unity of the Church were violated, and christian charity too often utterly destroyed. But we should not forget that human nature is still the same as it ever was; and that though the controversies of one age may often appear ridiculous in another, the disposition to contend about trifles may remain unchanged.¹

Not only, however, should we avoid the risk of causing needless strife by the discussion of such questions as are *in themselves* trifling, but those also are to be regarded as *to us* insignificant, which, however curious, sublime, and interesting, can lead to no practical result, and have no tendency to make us better Christians, but are merely matters of speculative curiosity. Paul is frequent and earnest in his exhortations to his converts to confine themselves to such studies as tend to the edification of the Church,—the increase of the fruits of the Spirit,—the conversion of infidels,—and the propagation of the essential doctrines of the Gospel. And these doctrines are all of a *practical* tendency. While all the systems framed by

¹ See *Lessons on Religious Worship*.

human superstition, enthusiasm, and imposture, whether Pagan, Romish, or Mahometan, abound, as might be expected, in mythological fables and marvellous legends, it is one of the most remarkable characteristics of the true religion, that it reveals nothing clearly that is not practically important for us to know with a view to our salvation. Our religion, as might no less be expected of one which comes not from Man, but from God, reveals to us, not the philosophy of the human mind in itself, nor yet the philosophy of the divine Nature in itself, but (that which is properly religion) the relation and connection of the two Beings ;—what God is *to us*,—what He has done, and will do for us,—and what we are to be and to do, in regard to Him.¹

Bacon, doubtless, does not mean to preclude all thought or mention of any subject connected with religion, whose practical utility we are unable to point out. On the contrary, he elsewhere urges us to pursue truth, without always requiring to perceive its practical application. But *all controversy*, and everything that is likely, under existing circumstances, to lead to controversy, on such points, must be carefully avoided. When once a flame is kindled, we cannot tell how far it may extend. And since, though we may be *allowed*, we cannot be *bound* in duty to discuss speculative points of theology, the blame of occasioning needless dissension must lie with those who so discuss them as to incur a risk that hostile parties may arise out of their speculations.

‘ Men create oppositions which are not, and put them into new terms so fixed, as whereas the meaning ought to govern the term, the term in effect governeth the meaning.’

So important are words in influencing our thoughts, and so common is the error of overlooking their importance, that we cannot give too much heed to this caution of Bacon as to our use of language in religious discussion. The rules most important to be observed are, first, to be aware of the *ambiguity* of words, and watchful against being misled by it ; since the *same* word not only may, but often must, be used to express *different* meanings ; and so common a source of dissension is the mistake hence arising of the meaning of others, that the

¹ See *Lectures on a Future State*, Lecture on the Millennium.

word *misunderstanding* is applied to disagreements in general : secondly (since, on the other hand, the *same* meaning may be expressed by *different* words), to guard against attaching too great importance to the use of any particular term : and lastly, to avoid, as much as possible, introducing or keeping up the use of any peculiar *set* of words and phrases, and ‘fixed terms,’ as Bacon calls them, as the badge of a party.

A neglect of this last rule, it is obvious, must greatly promote causeless divisions and all the evils of party-spirit. Any system appears the more distinct from all others, when provided with a distinct, regular, technical phraseology, like a corporate Body, with its coat of arms and motto. By this means, over and above all the real differences of opinion which exist, a fresh cause of opposition and separation is introduced among those who would perhaps be found, if their respective statements were candidly explained, to have in their tenets no real ground of disunion.¹ Nor will the consequences of such divisions be as trifling as their causes ; for when parties are once firmly established and arrayed against each other, their opposition will usually increase ; and the differences between them, which were originally little more than imaginary, may in time become serious and important. Experience would seem to teach us that the technical terms which were introduced professedly for the purpose of putting down heresies as they arose, did but serve rather to multiply heresies. This, at least, is certain, that as scientific theories and technical phraseology gained currency, party animosity raged the more violently. Those who, having magnified into serious evils by injudicious opposition, heresies in themselves insignificant, appealed to the magnitude of those evils to prove that their opposition was called for : like unskilful physicians, who, when by violent remedies they have aggravated a trifling disease into a dangerous one, urge the violence of the symptoms which they themselves have produced, in justification of their practice. They employed that violence in the cause of what they *believed* to be divine truth, which Jesus Himself and his Apostles expressly forbade in the cause of what they *knew* to be divine truth. ‘The servant of the Lord,’ says Paul, ‘must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves, if

¹ On this point I have treated fully in the *Tract on the Sacraments*.

God, peradventure, will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.’¹

On the whole, there is nothing that more tends to deprave the moral sense than Party, because it supplies that *sympathy* for which Man has a natural craving. To any one unconnected with Party, the temptations of personal interest or gratification are in some degree checked by the disapprobation of those around him. But a partisan finds himself surrounded by persons most of whom, though perhaps not unscrupulous in their private capacity, are prepared to *keep him in countenance* in much that is unjustifiable,—to overlook or excuse almost anything in a zealous and efficient partisan,—and even to applaud what in another they would condemn, so it does but promote some party-object. For, Party corrupts the conscience, by making almost all virtues flow, as it were, in *its own channel*. Zeal for truth becomes, gradually, zeal for the watchword—the shibboleth—of the party; justice, mercy, benevolence, are all limited to the members of that party, and are censured if extended to those of the opposite party, or (which is usually even more detested) those of no party. Candour is made to consist in putting the best construction on all that comes from one side, and the worst on all that does not. Whatever is wrong, in any member of the party, is either boldly denied, in the face of all evidence, or vindicated, or passed over in silence; and whatever is, or can be brought to appear, wrong on the opposite side, is readily credited, and brought forward, and exaggerated. The principles of conduct originally the noblest,—disinterested self-devotion, courage, and active zeal,—Party perverts to its own purposes: veracity, submissive humility, charity—in short, every christian virtue,—it enlists in its cause, and confines within its own limits; and the conscience becomes gradually so corrupted that it becomes a guide to evil instead of good. The ‘light that is in us becomes darkness.’²

‘We may not take up Mahomet’s sword, or like unto it; that is, to propagate religion by wars, or by sanguinary persecutions to force consciences.’

Although Bacon thus protests against the ‘forcing of men’s

¹ 2 Tim. xi. 25.

² See Annotations on Essay XXXIX.

consciences,' yet I am not quite sure, whether he fully embraced the principle that *all* secular coercion, small or great, in what regards religious faith, is contrary to the spirit of Christianity; and that a man's religion, as long as he conducts himself as a peaceable and good citizen, does not fall *within the province of the civil magistrate*. Bacon speaks with just horror of '*sanguinary persecutions*.' Now, *any* laws that can be properly called '*sanguinary*'—any undue severity—should be deprecated in *all* matters whatever; as if, for example, the penalty of death should be denounced for stealing a pin. But if religious truth does properly fall within the province of the civil magistrate,—if it be the office of government to provide for the *good* of the subjects, universally, including that of their souls, the rulers can have no more right to tolerate heresy, than theft or murder. They may plead that the propagation of false doctrine—that is, what is contrary to what *they* hold to be true,—is the worst kind of robbery, and is a murder of the soul. On that supposition, therefore, the degree of severity of the penalty denounced against religious offences, whether it shall be death, or exile, or fine, or imprisonment, or any other, becomes a mere political question, just as in the case of the penalties for other crimes.'¹

But if, on the contrary, we are to understand and comply

¹ The following is an extract from a *Protestant* book, published a few years ago:—'The magistrate who restrains, coerces, or punishes one who is propagating a true religion, opposes himself to God, and is a persecutor; but the magistrate who restrains, coerces, or punishes one who is propagating a false religion, obeys the command of God, *and is not a persecutor*.'

This is a doctrine which every persecutor in the world would fully admit.

On the other hand, take a passage from a Roman Catholic *History of England*; an educational book, which, it may be fairly said, is circulated in England at the *public expense*, under what is called the '*Separate system*;' the system which many are seeking to introduce into Ireland also.

'At last the queen and her council had Cranmer and a great many Protestant bishops put in prison, and they were burnt for heresy. This was very shocking; but it was much more difficult to know what to do then than it is now. Heresy was punishable by death at that time by the common law of the land, as forgery was some years since, and as murder is now. Those who disturbed the faith, and taught evil doctrines which destroyed the souls of others, were looked upon as malefactors, and as such they were given up to the law. We often hear it said that the Catholic Church must be a cruel Church to sanction such cruel deeds; but those who say this are mistaken. The punishment was inflicted, like every other penalty of the law, by the *Civil Power*, not by the Church.

'And although burning people at the stake is very shocking, every clear-sighted person must see that it is much more shocking to destroy the souls of men by heresy. This was what the Bishops Gardiner and Bonner thought.'

with, in the simple and obvious sense, our Lord's injunction to 'render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's;' and his declaration that his 'kingdom is not of this world;' and if we are to believe his Apostles sincere in renouncing, on behalf of themselves and their followers, all design of propagating their faith by secular force, or of monopolizing for Christians as such, or for any particular denomination of Christians, secular power and political rights, then, *all* penalties and privations, great or small, inflicted on purely religious grounds, must be equally of the character of persecution (though all are not equally *severe* persecution), and all alike unchristian. Persecution, in short, is not wrong *because* it is cruel, but it is cruel *because* it is wrong.¹

The Emperor Charles the Fifth, who had a mechanical turn, and amused himself, after his abdication, in making clocks, has been said to have been convinced of the folly of his violent attempts to bring all men to religious agreement, from finding that he could never bring his clocks to keep exactly the same time. But the opposite conclusion would be the more rational. For, if you did succeed in making all your clocks agree, by the internal motions of their works, you would have no need to apply external force. But if you found that when left to themselves they varied, and yet you were resolved that they should *exhibit an external agreement*, your only resource would be to fix on some one as the standard by which the rest should be regulated; and to move their hands from time to time so as to make all agree. And even so, if you could induce all men by force of argument to believe exactly as you do, there would be no need of resorting to external coercion; but if you could not bring them to this agreement and yet were resolved to have external conformity, you would then resort to force to make men *suppress* their real sentiments.

'Though religious liberty,' I have heard it said, 'ought to be enjoyed by all, we should remember that religious liberty does not imply irreligious liberty.' This proposition is one which I have known intelligent and well-principled men led to assent to; and which, I have no doubt, would, in many circles, be received with hearty acquiescence and applause. Yet, according

¹ See Essay 'On Persecution,' 3rd Series.

to the established usage of language, it is utterly untrue, and self-contradictory. When we speak of a man's being 'at liberty' to act in a certain way, we always understand that he is at liberty to act differently; that it *depends on himself* to do, or not to do, so and so. It would be thought absurd to speak of a Dean and Chapter being 'at liberty' to elect a certain individual, but not at liberty to refuse him; or to say of a man imprisoned, that he is at liberty to remain in jail, though not at liberty to leave it.¹ And any one would say that the freedom of Parliament was at an end, if they were authorized to pass any Bill the Ministry might propose, but not, to reject it.

According to the usual and proper sense of the words therefore, it is plain that religious liberty does imply irreligious liberty; and liberty to do right, liberty to do wrong.

¹ See Essay 'On the Kingdom of Christ,' note A,

ESSAY IV. OF REVENGE.

REVENGE is a kind of wild justice, which the more Man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out ; for as for the first wrong, it does but offend the law ; but the revenge of that wrong putteth the law out of office. Certainly, in taking revenge a man is but even with his enemy, but in passing it over he is superior ; for it is a prince's part to pardon : and Solomon, I am sure, saith, ' It is the glory of a man to pass by an offence.'¹ That which is past is gone and irrecoverable, and wise men have enough to do with things present and to come ; therefore they do but trifle with themselves, that labour in past matters. There is no man doth a wrong for the wrong's sake, but thereby to purchase himself profit, or pleasure, or honour, or the like ; therefore why should I be angry with a man for loving himself better than me ? And if any man should do wrong, merely out of ill-nature, why, yet it is but like the thorn or brier, which prick and scratch, because they can do no other. The most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there is no law to remedy : but then, let a man take heed the revenge be such as there is no law to punish ; else a man's enemy is still beforehand, and it is two for one.

Some, when they take revenge, are desirous the party should know whence it cometh : this is the more generous ; for the delight seemeth to be not so much in doing the hurt, as in making the party repent : but base and crafty cowards are like the arrow that flieth in the dark.

Cosmus, Duke of Florence, had a desperate saying against perfidious or neglecting² friends, as if those wrongs were unpardonable. ' You shall read,' saith he, ' that we are commanded to forgive our enemies, but you never read that we are commanded to forgive our friends.' But yet the spirit of Job³ was in a better tune : ' Shall we,' saith he, ' take good at God's hands, and not be content to take evil also ?' and so of friends in a proportion. This is certain, that a man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal

¹ *Proverbs* xix. 11. ² Neglecting. *Neglectful ; negligent.* ³ *Job* ii. 10.

and do well. Public revenges are for the most part fortunate; as that for the death of Cæsar; for the death of Pertinax; for the death of Henry III. of France; and many more. But in private revenges it is not so; nay, rather vindictive persons live the life of witches, who, as they are mischievous, so end they unfortunate.

ANTITHETA ON REVENGE.

PRO.

‘Vindicta privata, justitia agrestis.

‘*Private revenge is wild justice.*’

‘Qui vim rependit, legem tantum violat, non hominem.

‘*He who returns violence for violence, offends against the law only — not against the individual.*’

‘Utilis metus ultionis privatæ; nam leges nimium sæpe dormiunt.

‘*Private vengeance inspires a salutary fear, as the laws too often slumber.*’¹

CONTRA.

‘Qui injuriam fecit, principium malo dedit; qui reddidit, modum abstulit.

‘*He who has committed an injury has made a beginning of evil; he who returns it, has taken away all limit from it.*’

‘Vindicta, quo magis naturalis, eo magis coercenda.

‘*The more natural revenge is to man, the more it should be repressed.*’

‘Qui facile injuriam reddit, is fortasse tempore, non voluntate posterior erat.

‘*He who is ready in returning an injury, has, perhaps, been anticipated by his enemy only in time.*’

ANNOTATIONS.

‘*Some, when they take revenge, are desirous the party should know whence it cometh.*’

It is certainly, as Bacon remarks, ‘more generous’—or less ungenerous—to desire that the party receiving the punishment should ‘know whence it cometh.’ Aristotle distinguishes *οργη*—(‘Resentment’ or ‘Anger’) from *μισος*,—‘Hatred,’ (and when active, ‘Malice’)—by this. The one who hates, he says, wishes the object of his hatred to suffer, or to be destroyed, no matter by whom; while Resentment craves that he should know from whom, and for what, he suffers. And he instances Ulysses in the *Odyssey*, who was not satisfied with the vengeance he had

¹ See, in *Guy Mannering*, Pleydell’s remark, that if you have not a regular chimney for the smoke, it will find its way through the whole house.

taken, under a feigned name, on the Cyclops, till he had told him who he really was.

So Shakespere makes Macduff, in his eager desire of vengeance on Macbeth, say,

‘ If thou be slain, *and with no sword of mine,*
My wife’s and children’s ghosts will haunt me still.’

‘ *In taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy ; but in passing it over he is superior,*’ &c.

Bacon, in speaking of the duty, and of the difficulty, of forgiving injuries, might have remarked that some of the things hardest to forgive are not what any one would consider *injuries* (i.e., *wrongs*) at all.

Many would reprobate the use, in such a case, of the word *forgive*. And the word ought not to be insisted on ; though that most intelligent woman, Miss Elizabeth Smith, says (in her commonplace-book, from which posthumous extracts were published) that ‘ a *woman* has need of extraordinary gentleness and modesty to be *forgiven* for possessing superior ability and learning.’ She would probably have found this true even now, to a certain degree ; though less than in her time.

But not to insist on a word, say, instead of ‘ forgive,’ that it is hard to ‘ judge fairly of ’ and to ‘ feel kindly towards,’

(1.) One who adheres to the views which *were* yours, and which you have changed. This was, doubtless, one of the Apostle Paul’s trials. But in his case the miracle he had experienced, and the powers conferred on himself, could leave *no doubt* on his mind. But the trial is much harder when you hear arguments used against you which you had yourself formerly employed, and which you cannot now refute ; and when you rest on reasons which you had formerly shown to be futile, and which do not *quite* satisfy you now ; and when you know that you are suspected, and half-suspect yourself, of being in some way biassed. Then it is that you especially need some one to keep you in countenance ; and are tempted to be angry with those who will not, however they may abstain from reproaching you with apostasy.

Of course there is a trial on the opposite side also ; but it is far less severe. For, a *change* implies *error*, first or last ; and this is galling to one’s self-esteem. The one who had *adhered*

to his system, sect, or opinion, may hug himself on his (so-called) 'consistency;' and may congratulate himself—inwardly, if not openly,—on the thought that at least he *may* be quite right all through; whereas the other *must* have been wrong somewhere. 'I stand,' he may say to himself, 'where he *was*; I think as he thought, and do what he did; he cannot at any rate tax me with fickleness; nor can he blame anything in me which he was not himself guilty of.' All this is as soothing to the one party, as the thought of it is irritating to the other.

(2.) One who has proved right in the advice and warning he gave you, and which you rejected.

'I bear you no ill-will, Lizzy' (says Mr. Bennet, in Miss Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*), 'for being justified in the warning you gave me. Considering how things have turned out, I think this shows some magnanimity.'

(3.) One who has carried off some prize from you; whether the woman you were in love with, or some honour, or situation,—especially if he has attained with little exertion what you had been striving hard for, without success.

This last is noticed by Aristotle (*Rhetoric*, book ii.) as one great ground of *envy* ($\phi\theta\omicron\nu\omicron\varsigma$).

(4.) One who has succeeded in some undertaking whose failure you had predicted: such as the railroad over Chat Moss, which most of the engineers pronounced impossible; or the Duke of Bridgewater's aqueduct, which was derided as a castle in the air.

Again, with some minds of a baser nature, there is a difficulty, proverbially, in forgiving those whom one is conscious of having injured: and, again, those (especially if equals or inferiors) who have done *very great* and important services, beyond what can ever receive an adequate return. Rochefoucault even says that 'to *most* men it is less dangerous to do hurt than to do them too much good.' But then it was his system to look on the dark side only of mankind.

Tacitus, also, who is not very unlike him in this respect, says that 'benefits are acceptable as far as it appears they may be repaid; but that when they far exceed this, hatred takes the place of gratitude.' It is only, however, as has been said, the basest natures to whom any of these last-mentioned trials can occur, as trials.

In all these and some other such cases, there is evidently no *injury* ; and some will, as has been just said, protest against the use of the word 'forgive,' when there is no *wrong* to be forgiven.

Then avoid the word, if you will ; only do not go on to imagine that you have no need to keep down, with a *strong effort*, just the same kind of feelings that you *would* have had if there *had* been an injury. If you take for granted that no care is needed to repress such feelings, inasmuch as they would be so manifestly unreasonable, the probable result will be, that you will *not* repress but indulge them. You will not, indeed, *acknowledge to yourself* the *real* ground (as you do in the case of an actual injury) of your resentful feeling ; but you will deceive yourself by finding out some *other* ground, real or imaginary. 'It is not that the man adheres to his original views, but that he is an uncharitable bigot : ' 'It is not that I grudge him his success, but that he is too much puffed up with it : ' 'It is not that I myself was seeking the situation, but that he is unfit for it ; ' &c.

He who cultivates, in the right way, the habit of forgiving injuries, will acquire it. But if you *content* yourself with this, and do not cultivate a habit of candour in such cases as those above alluded to, you will be deficient in that ; for it does not *grow wild* in the soil of the human heart. And the unreasonableness and injustice of the feelings which *will* grow wild there, is a reason not why you should neglect to extirpate them, but why you should be the more ashamed of not doing so.

It is worth mentioning, that your judgment of any one's character who has done anything wrong, ought to be exactly the same, whether the wrong was done to *you* or to any one else. Any one by whom you have yourself been robbed or assaulted, is neither more nor less a robber, or a ruffian, than if he had so injured some other person, a stranger to you. This is evident ; yet there is great need to remind people of it ; for, as the very lowest minds of all regard with far the most disapprobation any wrong from which they themselves suffer, so, those a few steps, and only a few, above them, in their dread of such manifest injustice, think they cannot bend the twig too far the contrary way, and are for regarding (in theory, at least, if not in practice) wrongs to oneself as no wrongs at all. Such

a person will reckon it a point of heroic generosity to let loose on society a rogue who has cheated *him*, and to leave uncensured and unexposed a liar by whom *he* has been belied ; and the like in other cases. And if you refuse favour and countenance to those unworthy of it, whose misconduct has at all affected *you*, he will at once attribute this to personal vindictive feelings ; as if there could be no such thing as esteem and disesteem. One may even see tales, composed by persons not wanting in intelligence, and admired by many of what are called the educated classes, in which the virtue held up for admiration and imitation consists in selecting as a bosom friend, and a guide, and a model of excellence, one who had been guilty of manifest and gross injustice ; because the party had suffered personally from that injustice.

It is thus that ‘fools mistake reverse of wrong for right.’ The charity of some persons consists in proceeding on the supposition that to believe in the existence of an injury is to cherish implacable resentment ; and that it is impossible to forgive, except when there is nothing to be forgiven. It is obvious that these notions render nugatory the Gospel-precepts. Why should we be called upon to render good for evil, if we are bound always to explain away that evil, and call it good ? Where there is manifestly just ground for complaint, we should accustom ourselves to say, ‘That man owes me a hundred pence !’ thus at once estimating the debt at its just amount, and recalling to our mind the parable of him who rigorously enforced his own claims, when he had been forgiven ten thousand talents.

There is a whole class of what may be called *secondary* vulgar errors,—errors produced by a kind of re-action from those of people who are the very lowest of all, in point of intellect, or of moral sentiment,—errors which those fall into who are a few, and but a very few, steps higher.

Any one who ventures a remark on the above error, will be not unlikely to hear as a reply, ‘Oh, but most men are far *more* disposed to judge too severely than too favourably of one who has injured themselves or their friends.’ And this is true ; but it is nothing to the purpose, unless we lay down as a principle, that when one fault is more prevalent than another, the latter need not be shunned at all. ‘Of two evils, chuse the less,’ is a

just maxim, then, and then only, when there is *no other* alternative,—when we *must* take the one *or* the other : but it is mere folly to incur either, when it is in our power to *avoid both*. Those who speak of ‘a fault on the right side,’ should be reminded that though a greater error is worse than a less, there is *no right side* in error. And in the present case, it is plain our aim should be to judge of each man’s conduct *fairly* and impartially, and on the same principles, whether we ourselves, or a stranger, be the party concerned.

It may be added, that though the error of unduly glossing over misconduct when the injury has been done to oneself, is far less common than the opposite, among the mass of mankind, who have but little thought of justice and generosity, it is the error to which those are more liable who belong to a superior class,—those of a less coarse and vulgar mind ; and who, if they need admonition less, are more likely to profit by it, because they are striving to act on a right principle. The Patriarch Joseph, for instance, whose generous forgiveness of his brethren is justly admired, went into a faulty extreme when he told them (*Gen.* xlv. 5) ‘not to be angry with themselves,’ inasmuch as God had overruled for good the crime they had committed. If they were thence induced to feel no sorrow and shame, he had not done them any real benefit.

And a person of the disposition alluded to, will be liable to analogous errors in other matters also. For instance, he will perhaps show too little deference,—for fear of showing too much—for the judgment of those he highly esteems ; and will do injustice to a friend, in some cause he has to decide, through over-dread of partiality. And perhaps he will underrate the evidence for a religion he wishes to believe, from dread of an undue bias in its favour.¹

An actual case has been known of a person most of whose relatives were accustomed to speak of him much less favourably than they really thought ; not from want of good-will, but from dread of being thought partial. And the impression thus produced was such as might have been expected. It was supposed—very naturally—that they were giving the most favourable picture they could, when the contrary was the fact.

¹ See *Elements of Logic*, app. i., article, ‘Indifference.’

What ought to have been taken at a *premium*, was taken at a *discount*, and *vice versâ*: so that they damaged unfairly the reputation of one to whom they wished well.

It may be thought superfluous to warn any one against an excess of self-distrust. But in truth, there is the more danger of this, from the very circumstance that men are *not* usually warned against it, and fancy themselves quite safe from it. We should remember,—besides all other distrust,—to distrust our own self-distrust.

‘The most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there is no law to remedy.’

This is the ground taken by those who advocate, or palliate, the practice of *duelling*. The arguments for and against this view, are given in a little work entitled *An Expedition to the Interior of New Holland*.

‘On the one side it was contended that the appeal to single combat does not take place in cases where the law of the land provides adequate redress, but in those only where it either cannot or will not afford any, or any but such as would be a mere mockery to the feelings of the sufferer. A man, they urge, does not challenge any one for robbing him of his purse, or for firing his barn, but for injuries of quite a different description, far more grievous to one moving in a certain circle of society, but which the law either refuses to take cognizance of at all, or for which it provides such redress as would aggravate the evil by rendering the sufferer ridiculous. Now a man resigns to the community his natural right of personal self-defence, on the implied condition that the community shall protect him; and in cases, therefore, where it either cannot, or will not, fulfil this condition, his original natural right remains unimpaired. Thus, when a man is suddenly assaulted by a robber, he is free to defend his person and property as well as he can; and on the same principle, when the injury is of such a character as the law will not, or cannot, defend him from, he is left to guard his own honour with his own hand.

‘As to the evils resulting from duels, they observed that it is most unfair not to take into account—though to calculate would be impossible—the immense amount of evils prevented,

and which there is reason to suppose would take place, but for the apprehension of a duel. The insolence, the falsehood, the slander, the base and the overbearing conduct, which are daily kept in check in many thousands of persons by the recollection that there is such a thing as being 'called out' for such behaviour, is what no one can compute with any approach to accuracy; these being preventive and negative effects, and therefore incapable of being calculated, and liable to be underrated.

'On the other hand, it was maintained that the practice tended to defeat the very end proposed, and to lower (instead of raising, as was pretended) the tone of manners in the society. 'If,' they said, 'there were no such custom, then, any one, whether man or woman, who transgressed the rules which public opinion had sanctioned in the circle of society in which he or she moved, would at once be excluded from that circle. And the apprehension of this exclusion,—of thus losing caste, and being sent to Coventry, which is the ultimate penalty that such a society can inflict for a breach of its rules,—would be the best preventive of any violation of them,—the best preservative of the tone of the society, that it is possible to attain. If, under such a system, any one insulted another, he would be regarded as an ill-mannered brute, and excluded from good company: a woman who displayed levity of conduct would be at once excluded from reputable society: any one, man or woman, who should bring rash imputations against a neighbour, would be shunned as a slanderer: and so of the rest. But under the system of duelling, society offers an *alternative*; the only effect of which, as far as it operates, is unmixed evil. Instead of saying, absolutely, you must abstain from brutal insolence of demeanour, on pain of being excluded from our circle, it says, you must *either* abstain from insolence, *or* be ready to expose your life; instead of requiring a woman to abstain from levity of conduct, and defamatory language, on pain of forfeiting the countenance of respectable people, it proposes the alternative of *either* observing those rules, *or* the being prepared to encounter the ordeal.¹ And the result is, that those who possess personal intrepidity will often be enabled to

¹ This *ordeal* is described in the book alluded to.

transgress with impunity those rules of good society, which the duelling system professes to enforce. Nay more; the system tends to invest with a certain degree of dignity, arising from our admiration of personal courage, such conduct as would otherwise excite only unmitigated abhorrence and contempt. An insolent man, for instance, if by his insolence he braved no danger but that of expulsion from good company, would be simply despised: but since he also (under the other system) braves the danger of death, he obtains some degree of honour for his intrepidity. And though some may be deterred from such conduct by the fear of a challenge, others, on the contrary, may be encouraged to it, by a desire of displaying valour; especially if they have reason to think, from what they know of the other party, that a challenge will *not* ensue, and that they shall enjoy their triumph unmolested.

“Moreover, the magnitude of the injuries which one person actually can do to another is infinitely enhanced by the system of duels, because every affront offered is thus made to carry with it an imputation on one’s personal courage, which can only be wiped out by the exposure of life. If, for instance, I am a man of uniform and scrupulous veracity, and some ill-mannered ruffian gives me the lie, then, supposing duels unknown, the attack recoils entirely on the assailant. He is incapable of proving his charge—my life refutes it,—and the only result is that *he*, not I, is set down as a liar, for having falsely called me a liar. But under the other system, I must go out and expose my life, or else I am disgraced—disgraced, not as a *liar* (for *that* imputation, perhaps, is disbelieved after all), but as a *coward*, for not daring to risk my life in defence of my honour. And thus a person, who otherwise might have been incapable of doing me any serious hurt at all, has it in his power to propose to me at his pleasure the alternative of hazard to my life and violence to my conscience, or ignominy. A venom is thus added to the sting of the most contemptible insect.

“‘So much,’ said they, ‘for the protection thus provided for us against injuries the most painful to the feelings! Great part of the disgrace attaching to the authors of such injuries is removed; the injuries are probably rather increased than diminished in frequency; and in the pain they inflict, they are

undoubtedly aggravated tenfold.' With regard to the supposed necessity for a person's thus vindicating his own honour in certain cases, on the ground that the parties have no common authority to appeal to, this they flatly denied. The public opinion of the society they belong to, *is* that common authority. And that it is so, and is competent to decide effectually, is proved, they urged, by the very existence of duelling; for the duel itself is enforced by nothing else but public opinion. I am obliged, it is said, to challenge a man who has affronted me, because there is no authority to appeal to that will compel him to redress the injury. But what, then, compels him to *accept* the challenge? Nothing, but the knowledge that if he refused it, society would reject him as disgraced. Then, why should not society at once pronounce on him this sentence of disgrace for the affront itself, unless he makes a satisfactory submission? If he defies public opinion, and does not care for disgrace, he need not accept the challenge: if he does care for public opinion, then let the disgrace attach at once to the offering of the affront, instead of to the refusal of the challenge? It is manifest that those who have the power to propose the alternative, of either suffering disgrace or fighting, must have the power to discard the latter part of the alternative. Let society, therefore, but do its duty, and it is plain that it may, by a proper exertion of the power which it has, and which it actually exercises even now, restrain, and restrain much more effectually, without duelling, the very evils which duelling professes to remedy.''

ESSAY V. OF ADVERSITY.

IT was a high speech of Seneca (after the manner of the Stoics), that the ‘good things which belong to prosperity are to be wished, but the good things that belong to adversity are to be admired’—‘*Bona rerum secundarum optabilia, adversarum mirabilia.*’¹ Certainly, if miracles be the command over nature, they appear most in adversity. It is yet a higher speech of his than the other (much too high for a heathen), ‘It is true greatness to have in one the frailty of a man, and the security of a God’—‘*Vere magnum, habere fragilitatem hominis, securitatem Dei.*’² This would have done better in poesy,³ where transcendencies⁴ are more allowed; and the poets, indeed, have been busy with it—for it is in effect the thing which is figured in that strange fiction of the ancient poets, which seemeth not to be without mystery;⁵ nay, and to have some approach to the state of a Christian, ‘that Hercules, when he went to unbind Prometheus (by whom human nature is represented), sailed the length of the great ocean in an earthen pot or pitcher, lively describing christian resolution, that saileth in the frail bark of the flesh through the waves of the world.’⁶ But to speak in a mean,⁷ the virtue of prosperity is temperance, the virtue of adversity is fortitude, which in morals is the more heroical virtue. Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction, and the clearer revelation of God’s

¹ Sen. *Ad Lucil.* 66.

² Sen. *Ad Lucil.* 53.

³ Poesy. *Poetry.*

‘Musick and Poesy
To quicken you.’—*Shakespeare.*

⁴ Transcendencies. *Flights; soarings.*

⁵ Mystery. *A secret meaning; an emblem.*

‘Important truths still let your fables hold,
And moral mysteries with art enfold.’—*Granville.*

⁶ Apollod. *Deor. Orig.* II.

⁷ Mean. *Medium.*

‘Temperance, with golden square,
Betwixt them both can measure out a mean.’—*Shakespeare.*

favour. Yet even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp, you shall hear as many hearse-like airs as carols; and the pencil of the Holy Ghost hath laboured more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities¹ of Solomon. Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see in needleworks and embroideries, it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad² and solemn ground, than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground. Judge, therefore, of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant where they are incensed³ or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, and adversity doth best discover virtue.

ANNOTATIONS.

Some kinds of adversity are chiefly of the character of TRIALS, and others of DISCIPLINE. But Bacon does not advert to this difference, nor say anything at all about the distinction between *discipline* and *trial*; which are quite different in themselves, but often confounded together.

By 'discipline' is to be understood, anything—whether of the character of adversity or not—that has a *direct tendency to produce improvement*, or to create some qualification that did not exist before; and by trial, anything that tends to *ascertain* what improvement *has* been made, or what qualities exist. Both effects may be produced at once; but what we speak of is, the proper character of trial, as such, and of discipline, as such.

A *college tutor*, for instance, seeks to *make* his pupils good scholars; an *examiner*, to ascertain how far each candidate *is* such. It may so happen that the Tutor may be enabled to

¹ Felicities (rarely used in the plural). 'The *felicities* of her wonderful reign.' —*Atterbury*.

² Sad. *Dark-coloured*. 'I met him accidentally in London, in *sad-coloured* clothes, far from being costly.'—Walton's *Lives*.

³ Incensed. *Set on fire; burned*.

form a judgment of the proficiency of the pupils; and that a candidate may learn something from the Examiner. But what is essential in each case, is incidental in the other. For, no one would say that a course of lectures was a failure, if the pupils were well instructed, though the teacher might not have ascertained their proficiency; or that an examination had not answered its purpose, if the qualifications of the candidates were proved, though they might have learnt nothing from it.

A corresponding distinction holds good in a great many other things: for instance, what is called '*proving* a gun,' that is, loading it up to the muzzle and firing it—does not at all tend to increase its strength, but only proves that *it is* strong. Proper hammering and tempering of the metal, on the other hand, tends to *make* it strong.

These two things are, as has just been said, very likely to be confounded together: (1.) because very often they are actually *combined*; as *e.g.*, well-conducted exercise of the body, both displays, and promotes, strength and agility. The same holds good in the case of music, and various other pursuits, and in none more than in virtuous practice.

(2.) Because from discipline and from trial, and anything analogous to these, we may often draw the same inference, though by different reasonings: *e.g.*, if you know that a gun-barrel has gone through such and such processes, under a skilful metallurgist, you conclude *à priori* that it will be a strong one; and again you draw the same inference from knowing that it has been '*proved*.' This latter is an argument from a *sign*; the other, from *cause to effect*.¹ So also, if you know that a man has been under a good tutor, this enables you to form an *à priori* conjecture that he is a scholar; and by a different kind of argument, you infer the same from his having passed an examination.

Great evils may arise from mistaking the one of these things for the other. For instance, children's lives have been sacrificed by the attempt to *make* them hardy by exposing them to cold, and wet, and hardship. Those that have been so exposed are (as many of them as survive) hardy; because their having gone through it *proves* that they *were* of a strong constitution, though

¹ *Rhetoric*, part i. chap. 11.

it did not *make* them so. The 'proving' of a gun is the cause, not of its *being* strong, but of *our knowing* it to be strong. And it is wonderful how prevalent in all subjects is the tendency to confound these two things together: *e.g.*, Balak says to Balaam, 'I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.' And this must have been true, if Balaam was a true prophet; but the mistake was, to suppose that his curse or blessing brought on these results, when, in truth, it brought only the *knowledge* of the divine designs and sentences.

Different kinds of adversity, and also of prosperity, (for both are equally *trials*, though it is only *adversity* that is usually called such,) differ in this respect from each other, some being more of the character of Discipline, and others of Trial.

Generally speaking, a *small* degree of persecution and oppression is more of a discipline for humanity, than very great and long-continued. It is everywhere observed that a liberated slave is apt to make a merciless master, and that boys who have been cruelly fagged at school are cruel faggers. Sterne introduces a tender-hearted negro girl, of whom it is remarked that 'she had suffered oppression, and had learnt mercy,' as if this was a natural consequence. It would have been more true to have said, '*Although* she had suffered much oppression,' &c.

Most of the early Reformers were intolerant. Most bitter was the persecution, in the Low Countries, of the Arminians by the Calvinists, who had very recently been delivered from persecution themselves.¹ And a people who have been so long and so severely persecuted as the Vaudois, and yet retain, as *they* do, a mild and tolerant character, give strong evidence of the domination of a real christian principle.

The celebrated 'Pilgrim Fathers,' who fled from the tyranny of Laud and his abettors, to America, and are described as having 'sought only freedom to *worship God*,' had no notion of allowing the same freedom to others, but enacted and enforced the most severe penalties against all who differed from

¹ See, in Lord Macaulay's *History*, a case of most atrocious cruelty perpetrated by Presbyterians who had witnessed cruel persecution of themselves or their fathers. —Vol. iv. p. 781.

them, and compelled the ever-venerated Roger Williams, the great champion of toleration, to fly from them to Rhode Island, where he founded a colony on his own truly christian system. One of the principal founders of the New England colony remonstrated with these persecutors, saying (in a letter given in a late number of the *Edinburgh Review*),¹ ‘Reverend and dear sirs, whom I unfeignedly love and respect, it doth not a little grieve my spirit to hear what sad things are reported daily of your tyranny and persecution in New England, as that you fine, whip, and imprison men for their consciences. First, you compel such to come into your assemblies as you know will not join you in your worship; and when they show their dislike thereof, or witness against it, then you stir up your magistrates to punish them, for such, as you conceive, their public affronts. Truly, friends, this your practice of compelling any, in matters of worship, to that whereof they are not fully persuaded, is to make them sin; for so the Apostle (*Romans* xiv. 23) tells us; and many are made hypocrites thereby, conforming in their outward acts for fear of punishment. We pray for you, and wish you prosperity every way; hoping the Lord would have given you so much light and love there, that you might have been eyes to God’s people here, and not to practise those courses in a wilderness which you went so far to prevent.’ They replied, ‘Better be hypocrites than profane persons. Hypocrites give God part of his due—the outward man; but the profane person giveth God neither outward nor inward man. You know not if you think we came into this wilderness to practise those courses which we fled from in England. We believe there is a vast difference between men’s inventions and God’s institutions: we fled from men’s inventions, to which we else should have been compelled; we compel none to men’s inventions.’

About the same time Williams sent a warm remonstrance to his old friend and governor, Endicott, against these violent proceedings. The Massachusetts theocracy could not complain that none showed them their error: they did not persevere in the system of persecution without having its wrongfulness fully pointed out.

‘Had Bunyan,’ says the Reviewer,² ‘opened his conventicle in

¹ Oct. 1855, p. 564.

² Page 510.

Boston, he would have been banished, if not whipped ; had Lord Baltimore appeared there, he would have been liable to perpetual imprisonment. If Penn had escaped with either of his ears, the more pertinacious Fox would, doubtless, have ended by mounting the gallows with Marmaduke Stephenson or William Leddra. Yet the authors of these extremities would have had no admissible pretext. They were not instigated by the dread of similar persecution, or by the impulse to retaliate. There was no hierarchy to invite them to the plains of Armageddon ; there was no Agag to hew in pieces, or kings and nobles to bind with links of iron. They persecuted spontaneously, deliberately, and securely. Or rather, it might be said, they were cruel under difficulties. They trod the grapes of their wine-press in a city of refuge, and converted their Zoar into a house of Egyptian bondage ; and, in this respect, we conceive they are without a parallel in history.'

On the other hand, a short or occasional oppression is a good discipline for teaching any one not very ill disposed to feel for others.

Lord Macaulay beautifully illustrates this from the tale of the Fisherman and the Genie, in the *Arabian Nights*. 'The genie had at first vowed that he would confer wonderful gifts on any one who should release him from the casket in which he was imprisoned ; and during a second period he had vowed a still more splendid reward. But being still disappointed, he next vowed to grant no other favour to his liberator than to chuse what death he should suffer. Even thus, a people who have been enslaved and oppressed for some years are most grateful to their liberators ; but those who are set free after very long slavery are not unlikely to tear their liberators to pieces.'

Sickness is a kind of adversity which is both a trial and a discipline ; but much more of a discipline when short, and of a trial when very long. The kindness of friends during sickness is calculated, when it is newly called forth, to touch the heart, and call forth gratitude ; but the confirmed invalid is in danger of becoming absorbed in self, and of taking all kinds of care and of sacrifice as a matter of course.

Danger of death is another kind of adversity which has both characters ; but it is much more of a wholesome discipline

when the danger is from a storm, or from any other external cause than from *sickness*. The well-known proverb, 'the Devil was sick,' &c., shows how generally it has been observed that people, when they recover, forget the resolutions formed during sickness. One reason of the difference—and perhaps the chief—is, that it is so much easier to *recall* exactly the sensations felt when in perfect health and yet in imminent danger, and to act over again, as it were, in imagination, the whole scene, than to recall fully, when in health, the state of mind during some sickness, which itself so much affects the mind along with the body.

But it is quite possible either to improve, or to fail to improve, either kind of affliction.

And, universally, it is to be observed that, though in other matters, there may be trials which are *nothing but* trials, and have no tendency to improve the subject tried, but merely to *test* it (as in the case of the *proving* of a gun alluded to above), this can never be the case in what relates to *moral conduct*. *Every* kind of trial, if well endured, tends to fortify the good principle. There are, indeed, many things which are more likely to hurt than to improve the moral character; and to such trials *we should be unjustifiable* in exposing ourselves or others unnecessarily. But these, if any one does go through them well, do not *merely prove* the moral principle to be good, but will have had the effect of still further fortifying it. There is truth, both literally and metaphorically in the proverb, that 'The tree roots more fast, which has stood a rough blast.' For it is found that the agitation of a tree in an exposed situation, by winds which do not overthrow it, causes it to put out more and stronger roots. Even so, every temptation that has been withstood,—every trial firmly undergone,—strengthens the roots of good principle.

And the converse, unhappily, holds good also. Every kind of improving process—religious study, good example, or whatever else,—if it does not leave you the better, will leave you the worse. Let no one flatter himself that anything external will *make* him wise or virtuous, without his taking pains to *learn* wisdom or virtue from it. And if any one says of any affliction, 'No doubt it is all sent for my good,' he should be reminded to ask himself whether he is *seeking to get* any good out of it. 'Sweet,' says the poet, 'are the uses of adversity;'

but this is for those only who take care to *make* a good use of it.

Most carefully should we avoid the error which some parents, not (otherwise) deficient in good sense, commit, of imposing gratuitous restrictions and privations, and purposely inflicting needless disappointments, for the purpose of inuring children to the pains and troubles they will meet with in after-life. Yes, be assured they *will* meet with quite *enough*, in every portion of life, including childhood, without your strewing their paths with thorns of your own providing. And often enough will you have to limit their amusements for the sake of needful study, to restrain their appetites for the sake of health, to chastise them for faults, and in various ways to inflict pain or privations for the sake of avoiding some greater evils. Let this always be explained to them whenever it is possible to do so; and endeavour in all cases to make them look on the parent as never the *voluntary* giver of anything but good. To any hardships which they are convinced you inflict reluctantly, and to those which occur through the dispensations of the All-Wise, they will more easily be trained to submit with a good grace, than to any gratuitous sufferings devised for them by fallible men. To raise hopes on purpose to produce disappointment, to give provocation merely to exercise the temper, and, in short, to inflict pain of any kind merely as a training for patience and fortitude—this is a kind of discipline which Man should not presume to attempt. If such trials prove a discipline not so much of cheerful fortitude as of resentful aversion and suspicious distrust of the parent as a capricious tyrant, you will have only yourself to thank for this result.

‘ Since the end of suffering, as a moral discipline,’ says an excellent writer in the *Edinburgh Review* (January, 1847), on the Life of Pascal, ‘ is only to enable us at last to bear unclouded happiness, what guarantee can we now have of its beneficial effect on us, except by partial experiments of our capacity of recollecting and practising the lessons of adversity in intervals of prosperity? It is true that there is no more perilous ordeal through which Man can pass—no greater curse which can be imposed on him, as he is at present constituted—than that of

being compelled to walk his life long in the sunlight of unshaded prosperity. His eyes ache with that too untempered brilliance—he is apt to be smitten with a moral *coup de soleil*. But it as little follows that no sunshine is good for us. He who made us, and who tutors us, alone knows what is the exact measure of light and shade, sun and cloud, storm and calm, frost and heat, which will best tend to mature those flowers which are the object of this celestial husbandry; and which, when transplanted into the paradise of God, are to bloom there for ever in amaranthine loveliness. Nor can it be without presumption that we essay to interfere with these processes; our highest wisdom is to fall in with them. And certain it is that every man will find by experience that he has enough to do, to bear with patience and fortitude the *real* afflictions with which God may visit him, without venturing to fill up the intervals in which He has left him ease, and even invites him to gladness, by a self-imposed and artificial sorrow. Nay, if his mind be well constituted, he will feel that the learning how to apply, in hours of happiness, the lessons which he has learned in the school of sorrow, is not one of the least difficult lessons which sorrow has to teach him; not to mention that the grateful reception of God's gifts is as true a part of duty—and even a more neglected part of it—than a patient submission to his chastisements.

‘It is at our peril, then, that we seek to interfere with the discipline which is provided for us. He who acts as if God had mistaken the proportions in which prosperity and adversity should be allotted to us—and seeks by hair shirts, prolonged abstinence, and self-imposed penance, to render more perfect the discipline of suffering,—only enfeebles instead of invigorating his piety; and resembles one of those hypochondriacal patients—the plague and torment of physicians—who having sought advice, and being supposed to follow it, are found not only taking their physician's well-judged prescriptions, but secretly dosing themselves in the intervals with some quackish nostrum. Thus it was even with a Pascal—and we cannot see that the experiment was attended in his case with any better effects.’

‘Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament ; Adversity is the blessing of the New.’

The distinguishing characteristic of the Old Covenant, of the Mosaic Law, was that it was enforced by a system of *temporal rewards and judgments*, administered according to an extraordinary [miraculous] providence. The Israelites were promised, as the reward of obedience, long life, and health, and plentiful harvests, and victory over their enemies. And the punishments threatened for disobedience were pestilence, famine, defeat, and all kinds of temporal calamity. These were the rewards and punishments that formed the *sanction* of the Mosaic Law. But the New Covenant, the Gospel, held out as its sanction rewards and punishments in the next world, and those only. The former kingdom of God was a kingdom of this world. The Lord Jesus, on the contrary, declared that the new kingdom of God, His kingdom, ‘was not of this world.’ And so far from promising worldly prosperity to his followers as a reward of their obedience to Him, He prepared them for suffering and death in his cause, even such as He endured Himself; and pronounced them ‘blessed when men should hate and persecute’ them in his cause, saying, ‘great is your reward in Heaven.’ The Disciples were indeed taught, and through them all Christians in every age are taught, that the painful trials sent to them were among the ‘things that work together for good (that is, spiritual and eternal good) to them that love God;’ and that they ought not to think it ‘strange concerning the fiery trial which was to try them, as though some strange thing happened unto them,’ but to look to the example of the Lord Jesus, and ‘rejoice in Him always.’

Under the christian dispensation, therefore, chastisement is for a very different purpose from retribution; the allotment of good and evil, according to the character of each man (which is properly retribution), is reserved for the next world. The Apostle Paul points out as one of the *characteristics* of the Gospel, that in it God has ‘commanded all men everywhere to repent, inasmuch as He has APPOINTED A DAY in which He will judge the world in righteousness.’

The novelty and peculiarity of this announcement consisted,

not in declaring the Deity to be the *Judge* of the world (for this the Jews knew, and most of the Pagans believed), but in declaring that He had appointed a *day for that judgment*, before Christ's tribunal in the *next* world. They were henceforth to look for a retribution, not, as before with the Jews, regular, and with other nations occasionally, but prepared for *all* men according to the character of each; not, as before, immediate in the present life, but in the life to come.

It is true that some men, who are nearly strangers to such a habit, may be for a time more alarmed by the denunciation of immediate temporal judgments for their sins, than by any considerations relative to 'the things which are not seen and which are eternal.' And when such denunciations rest not on *uncertain* predictions, but on an undeniable and notorious connexion of cause with effect,—as, for instance, of intemperance with disease, or of prodigality with penury—a salutary alarm may be created in some who are unmoved by higher considerations. But such an alarm should be regarded merely as a first step;—as a *scaffolding* which is to be succeeded by a building of better foundation. For, the effect thus produced, if we trust to that alone, is much less likely to be lasting, or while it lasts to be salutary, because temporal alarm does not tend to make men spiritually-minded, and any reformation of manners it may have produced, will not have been founded on christian principles. A man is not more acceptable in the sight of God than before, though more likely to attain the temporal objects he aims at, if he is acting on no higher motive than the goods and evils of the present world can supply. 'Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.'

But to look for temporal retribution, is surely inconsistent with the profession of a religion whose Founder was persecuted and crucified, and whose first preachers were exposed to 'hunger, and thirst, and cold, and nakedness,' and every kind of hardship, and were 'made the offscouring of all things;' so that they declared that 'if in this life only they had hope in Christ, they were of all men most miserable.' We should consider, too, that those very sufferings were a stumblingblock to the unbelieving Jews; not merely from their being unwilling to expose themselves to the like, according to the forewarnings of Jesus, such as 'In this world ye shall have tribulation;' but still more

from their regarding these sufferings *as a mark of divine displeasure*, and consequently a proof that Jesus could not have come from God. Because He was 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,' they 'did esteem him stricken, SMITTEN OF GOD, and afflicted,' and they 'hid their face from Him.'

And it should be remembered, that the *Jews*, who had been brought up under a dispensation sanctioned by temporal rewards and punishments, were less inexcusable in this their error, than those *Christians* who presume to measure the divine favour and disfavour by temporal events.

ESSAY VI. OF SIMULATION¹ AND DISSIMULATION.

DISSIMULATION is but a faint kind of policy, or wisdom ; for it asketh a strong wit and a strong heart to know when to tell truth, and to do it—therefore it is the weaker sort of politicians that are the greatest dissemblers.

Tacitus saith, ‘ Livia sorted² well with the arts of her husband and dissimulation of her son,’³ attributing arts of policy to Augustus, and dissimulation to Tiberius ; and again, when Mucianus encourageth Vespasian to take arms against Vitellius, he saith, ‘ We rise not against the piercing judgment of Augustus, nor the extreme caution or closeness of Tiberius.’⁴ These properties of arts, or policy, and dissimulation, and closeness, are indeed habits and faculties several,⁵ and to be distinguished ; for if a man have that penetration of judgment as⁶ he can discern what things are to be laid open, and what to be secreted, and what to be showed at half-lights, and to whom and when (which indeed are arts of state, and arts of life, as Tacitus well calleth them), to him a habit of dissimulation is a hindrance and a poorness. But if a man cannot obtain to⁷ that judgment, then it is left to him generally to be close, and a dissembler ; for where a man cannot chuse or vary in particulars, there it is good to take the safest and wariest way in general, like the going softly by one that cannot well see. Certainly the ablest men that ever were, have had all an openness and frankness of dealing, and a name of certainty and veracity ; but then they were like horses well managed, for they could tell passing well when to stop or turn, and at such times when they thought the

¹ Simulation. *The pretending that to be which is not.* ‘The feigning to be what one is not by gesture, action, or behaviour, is called *simulation*.’—*South*.

² Sort. *To fit ; suit.*

‘It sorts well with your fierceness.’—*Shakespeare*.

³ Tacit. *Annal.* v. i.

⁴ Tacit. *Hist.* ii. 76.

⁵ Several. *Different ; distinct.*

‘Four several armies to the field are led,
Which, high in equal hopes, four princes lead.’—*Dryden*.

⁶ As. *That.* See page 26.

⁷ Obtain to. *Attain to.*

case indeed required dissimulation, if then they used it, it came to pass that the former opinion, spread abroad, of their good faith and clearness of dealing, made them almost invisible.

There be three degrees of this hiding and veiling of a man's self: the first, closeness, reservation, and secrecy,—when a man leaveth himself without observation, or without hold to be taken, what he is; the second, dissimulation in the negative,—when a man lets fall signs and arguments that he is not that he is; and the third, simulation in the affirmative,—when a man industriously and expressly feigns and pretends to be that¹ he is not.

For the first of these, secrecy, it is indeed the virtue of a confessor; and assuredly the secret man heareth many confessions, for who will open himself to a blab or a babbler? But if a man be thought secret, it inviteth discovery, as the more close air sucketh in the more open; and as in confessing, the revealing is not for worldly use, but for the ease of a man's heart; so secret men come to the knowledge of many things in that kind, while men rather discharge their minds than impart their minds. In few words, mysteries are due to secrecy. Besides (to say truth) nakedness is uncomely, as well in mind as in body; and it addeth no small reverence to men's manners and actions, if they be not altogether open. As for talkers, and futile² persons, they are commonly vain and credulous withal; for he that talketh what he knoweth, will also talk what he knoweth not; therefore set it down, that a habit of secrecy is both politic and moral; and in this part it is good that a man's face give his tongue leave to speak; for the discovery of a man's self, by the tracts³ of his countenance, is a great weakness and betraying, by how much it is many times more marked and believed than a man's words.

For the second, which is dissimulation, it followeth many times upon secrecy, by a necessity; so that he that will be secret, must be a dissembler in some degree,—for men are too cunning to suffer a man to keep an indifferent⁴ carriage between

¹ That. *What; that which.* 'To do always *that* is righteous in thy sight.'—*English Liturgy.*

² Futile. *Talkative; loquacious.* 'The parable (Prov. xxix. 2), it seems, especially corrects not the *futility* of vaine persons which easily utter as well what may be spoken as what should be secreted; not garrulity whereby they fill others, even to a surfeit; but the government of speech.'—*On Learning.* By G. Watts.

³ Tracts. *Traits (traits); features.*

⁴ Indifferent. *Impartial.* 'That they may truly and *indifferently* minister justice.'—*Prayer for the Church Militant.*

both, and to be secret, without swaying the balance on either side. They will so beset a man with questions, and draw him on, and pick it out of him, that, without an absurd silence, he must show an inclination one way; or if he do not, they will gather as much by his silence as by his speech. As for equivocations, or oraculous¹ speeches, they cannot hold out long; so that no man can be secret, except he give himself a little scope of dissimulation, which is, as it were, but the skirts or train of secrecy.

But for the third degree, which is simulation and false profession, that I hold more culpable, and less politic, except it be in great and rare matters; and, therefore, a general custom of simulation (which is this last degree) is a vice rising either of² a natural falseness, or fearfulness, or of a mind that hath some main faults, which, because a man must needs disguise, it maketh him practise simulation in other things, lest his hand should be out of use.

The advantages of simulation and dissimulation are three—first, to lay asleep opposition, and to surprise; for where a man's intentions are published, it is an alarm to call up all that are against them: the second is, to reserve to a man's self a fair retreat; for, if a man engage himself by a manifest declaration, he must go through, or take a fall: the third is, the better to discover the mind of another; for to him that opens himself, men will hardly show themselves averse, but will (fair³) let him go on, and turn their freedom of speech to freedom of thought; and therefore it is a good shrewd proverb of the Spaniard, 'Tell a lie and find a troth,' as if there were no way of discovery but by simulation. There be also three disadvantages to set it even: the first, that simulation and dissimulation commonly carry with them a show of fearfulness, which, in any business, doth spoil the feathers of round⁴ flying up to the mark; the second,

¹ Oraculous. *Oracular.*

'He spoke *oraculous* and sly;
He'd neither grant the question, nor deny.'—*King.*

² Of. *From.* 'Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness.'—*Luke xvi. 9.*

³ Fair (adverb). *Complaisantly.*

'Thus *fair* they parted till the morrow's dawn.'—*Dryden.*

⁴ Round. *Direct.*

'Let her be *round* with him.'—*Shakespeare.*

that it puzzleth and perplexeth the conceits¹ of many, that perhaps would otherwise co-operate with him, and makes a man walk almost alone to his own ends ; the third, and greatest, is, that it depriveth a man of one of the most principal instruments for action, which is trust and belief. The best composition and temperature² is, to have openness in fame and opinion ; secrecy in habit ; dissimulation in seasonable use ; and a power to feign, if there be no remedy.

ANTITHETA ON SIMULATION AND DISSIMULATION.

PRO.

‘Dissimulatio, compendiaria sapientia.

‘The art of concealing is a short cut to the most important part of practical wisdom.’

‘Sepes consiliorum, dissimulatio.

‘Concealment is the hedge of our designs.’

‘Qui indissimulanter omnia agit, æque decipit ; nam plurimi, aut non capiunt, aut non credunt.

‘He who acts in all things openly does not deceive the less ; for most persons either do not understand, or do not believe him.’

CONTRA.

‘Quibus artes civiles supra captum ingenii sunt, iis dissimulatio pro prudentia erit.

‘Those whose minds cannot grasp political sagacity, substitute dissimulation for prudence.’

‘Qui dissimulat, præcipuo ad agendum instrumento se privat—i.e., fide.

‘He who practises concealment deprives himself of a most important instrument of action—namely, confidence.’

‘Dissimulatio dissimulationem invitat.

‘Dissimulation invites dissimulation.’

ANNOTATIONS.

‘Of Simulation.’

It is a pity that our language has lost the word ‘simulation,’ so that we are forced to make ‘dissimulation’ serve for both senses.

‘Id quod abest, simulat, dissimulat quod adest.’³

‘The ablest men have all had an openness and frankness,’ &c.

There is much truth in Bacon’s remark in the Antitheta,

¹ Conceits. Conceptions—as :

‘You have a noble and a true conceit
Of godlike amity.’—*Shakespeare*.

² Temperature. Constitution. ‘Memory depends upon the temperature of the brain.’—*Watts*.

³ ‘Simulates that which is not ; dissimulates that which is.’

that those whose whole conduct is open and undisguised deceive people not the less, because the generality either do not understand them, or do not believe them. And this is particularly the case when those you have to deal with are of a crafty character. They expend great ingenuity in guessing what it is you mean, or what you design to do, and the only thing that never occurs to them, is, just what you have said.

It is to be observed, however, that some persons, who are not really frank and open characters, appear such, from their want of delicacy and of refined moral taste. They speak openly of things pertaining to themselves (such as most people would suppress), not from incapacity for disguise, or from meaning to making a confidant of you, but from absence of shame. And such a person may be capable of much artifice when it suits his purpose. It is well, therefore, that the inexperienced should be warned against mistaking shamelessness for sincerity of character.

Those who are habitually very reserved, and (as Miss Edgeworth expresses it in one of her tales) ‘think that in general it is best not to mention things,’ will usually meet with fewer tangible failures than the more communicative, unless these latter possess an unusual share of sagacity; but the latter will (unless excessively imprudent) have a greater amount of success, on the whole, by gaining many advantages which the others will have missed.

‘They will so beset a man with questions.’

There is, as Bacon observes, a great difficulty in dealing with such persons; for a true answer to their impertinent questions might do great mischief; and to refuse an answer would be understood as the same thing. ‘Pray, do you know the author of that article? Is it your friend Mr. So-and-so?’ or, ‘Is it true that your friend Such-a-one has had heavy losses, and is likely to become insolvent?’ or, ‘Is he concealed in such-and-such a place?’ &c. If you reply, ‘I do not chuse to answer,’ this will be considered as equivalent to an answer in the affirmative.

It is told of Dean Swift, that when some one he had lampooned came and asked him whether he was the writer of those verses, he replied, that long ago he had consulted an experienced

lawyer what was best to be done when some scoundrel who had been shown up in a satire asked him whether he were the author ; and that the lawyer advised him always, whether he had written it or not, to deny the authorship,—and, ‘accordingly,’ said he, ‘I now tell you that I am not the author.’

Some similar kind of *rebuke* is, perhaps, the best answer to give.

A well-known author once received a letter from a peer with whom he was slightly acquainted, asking him whether he was the author of a certain article in the *Edinburgh Review*. He replied that he never made communications of that kind, except to intimate friends, selected by himself for the purpose, when he saw fit. His refusal to answer, however, pointed him out—which, as it happened, he did not care for—as the author. But a case might occur, in which the revelation of the authorship might involve a friend in some serious difficulties. In any such case, he might have answered something in this style: ‘I have received a letter purporting to be from your lordship, but the matter of it induces me to suspect that it is a forgery by some mischievous trickster. The writer asks whether I am the author of a certain article. It is a sort of question which no one has a right to ask ; and I think, therefore, that every one is bound to discourage such inquiries by answering them—whether one is or is not the author—with a rebuke for asking impertinent questions about private matters. I say ‘private,’ because, if an article be libellous or seditious, the law is open, and any one may proceed against the publisher, and compel him either to give up the author, or to bear the penalty. If, again, it contains false statements, these, coming from an anonymous pen, may be simply contradicted. And if the arguments be unsound, the obvious course is to refute them. But *who* wrote it, is a question of idle or of mischievous curiosity, as it relates to the private concerns of an individual.

‘If I were to ask your lordship, ‘Do you spend your income? or lay by? or outrun? Do you and your lady ever have an altercation? Was she your first love? or were you attached to some one else before?’ If I were to ask such questions, your lordship’s answer would probably be, to desire the footman to show me out. Now, the present inquiry I regard as no less unjustifiable, and relating to private concerns : and, therefore, I

think every one bound, when so questioned, always, whether he is the author or not, to meet the inquiry with a rebuke.

‘Hoping that my conjecture is right, of the letter’s being a forgery, I remain,’ &c.

In any case, however, in which a refusal to answer does not convey any information, the best way, perhaps, of meeting impertinent inquiries, is by saying, ‘Can you keep a secret?’ and when the other answers that he can, you may reply, ‘Well, so can I.’

‘*Openness in fame and opinion.*’

‘Everybody (says one of Miss Edgeworth’s characters) says that my mother is the most artful woman in the world: and I should think so, if everybody *did not say* it; for if she *was*, you know, nobody would ever find it out.’ There is certainly no point in which the maxim is more applicable, that ‘it is a matter of Art to conceal the Art.’

‘*The power to feign when there is no remedy.*’

This power is certainly a dangerous one to possess, because one will be tempted to say, again and again, and on slighter and slighter occasions, ‘Now, there is no remedy; there is nothing for it but to feign:’ that is, perhaps, there is no other mode of effecting the object you have in view.

Certainly it is a nobler thing to have the *power* and not to use it, than to abstain from feigning, through incapacity. But there are few cases, and to most people, none, in which it is justifiable. It is indeed quite allowable for a General to deceive the enemy by stratagems (so called from that very circumstance), because where no confidence is reposed, none can be violated. And again it is a kind of *war* that is carried on between policemen and thieves. In dealing with madmen, again, there is no more fraud in deceiving them than in angling for trout with an artificial fly; because you are not really dealing with fellow-men. For, though an insane patient considered as to his own proper *self*, apart from his malady, is, of course, entitled to justice and kindness, he is, in his present state, what is usually (and not incorrectly) called ‘one *beside himself*’—‘*not himself*’—‘*out of his mind*,’ and is regarded as not responsible for his acts, on the very ground that they are not properly *his own* acts, but those of an irrational being.

But with the exception of such cases, feigning cannot be justified.

A *pleader* is greatly exposed to temptations to this practice. He has indeed a right to urge all that can be fairly said in his client's favour, and to expose any flaws in the opposite evidence. But it will often serve his cause, to protest solemnly his own sincere conviction, when he feels none; to tax with falsehood the opposed witnesses, when there is no ground for it; and to bring forward fallacious arguments, and mis-statements of facts. [See the Essay on 'Judicature.'] And perhaps he salves his conscience by the consideration that no one is bound to believe him; though it is evident he says what he does say, in the *hope* of being believed.

How little there is in the world of a really scrupulous reverence for truth, one may see but too many proofs every day. The sentiment expressed by an author of some repute (noticed in the Annotations on Essay I.), implies not only an utter disregard for truth, in what pertains to religion, but also a conviction (founded probably on some knowledge of the world) that the open *avowal* of this was not likely to do him any discredit. We see journalists, again, admitted—so they do but write ably—to be guides of public opinion, even when it is manifest and notorious that they have no principle but that of writing what will *sell* best, and are ready to pander to any popular prejudice, and to contradict to-day what they said yesterday, without the least regard for truth and justice, or for the public welfare, or even for decent consistency, when gain is in prospect.

And we may see men admired not only as eminently pious, but as *sincere*, who have openly professed and vindicated the system of 'reserve,' (or 'economy,') that is, the concealment of their own real sentiments, and the deliberate suppression of portions of God's revealed truth; which are to be kept back, it seems, from the mass of mankind. But then, what these men do teach, is, we are told, the truth, though not the whole truth: as if the omission of one portion did not materially affect, in practice, the character of the rest.¹ It has been

¹ The reader is referred to Archdeacon West's *Discourse on Reserve*; to the Charge on *Instruction in the Scriptures* (1857), sec. 7, and to that useful and important work, the *Index to the Tracts for the Times*.

remarked that in a marble statue, every particle remains in exactly the same position in which it existed in the block; the sculptor has merely *removed* the other portions, and thus discovered the statue. Yet he is generally considered to have *made* a graven image.

Then again, these same Divines have found a mode of interpreting 'in a non-natural sense,' the Articles and other Formularies of the Church to which they profess adherence; holding it allowable to take words in any sense they can be brought to bear, in open disregard of the sense in which the writers designed and knew them to be understood.¹

And the same principle is sometimes acted on by persons of quite a different school. These have been known, for instance, to maintain that our Lord's declaration, 'My kingdom is not of this world,' may be interpreted as relating to the *then-present* time only, and does not imply that his kingdom—though 'not of this world,' *then*, was not to become such, hereafter! He however must have known that his words could not have been so *understood*; else He would have been *pleading guilty* to the charge brought against Him. For, the very design imputed to Him and his followers, and which they always disavowed, was that of designing *hereafter* to subvert existing governments, and monopolize temporal power. If therefore they *had* cherished such a design, while they expressed themselves ambiguously, so as to be understood to disclaim it, then, most fairly might the most fraudulent of the *Jesuits* call themselves 'companions of Jesus!'

It is really painful to be compelled to impute disingenuousness to persons who manifest much religious zeal. But when men are found using such arguments, and maintaining such principles, on some points, as, on others, they reprobate;—setting up, for instance, to serve a purpose, a tradition more recent by several centuries² than any of the Romish ones which they deride,—it is impossible to give them credit for sincerity in the *means* resorted to, however sincere may be their belief in the goodness of their end.

¹ See *Tract XC.*, reprinted by Messrs. Hope, London.

² See *Thoughts on the Sabbath.*

‘Dissimulation is but a faint kind of policy.’

What Bacon says of the inexpediency of all insincere proceedings is very true. Nothing but the right can ever be the expedient, since that can never be true expediency which would sacrifice a greater good to a less,—‘For what shall it *profit* a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul.’ It will be found that all frauds, like the ‘wall daubed with untempered mortar,’ with which men think to buttress up an edifice, tend to the decay of that which they are devised to support. This truth, however, will never be steadily acted on by those who have no moral detestation of falsehood. It is not *given* to those who do not prize straightforwardness for its own sake, to perceive that it is the wisest course. The maxim that ‘honesty is the best policy’ is one which, perhaps, no one ever is habitually guided by in practice. An honest man is always *before* it, and a knave is generally *behind* it. He does not find out, till too late,

‘What a tangled web we weave
When first we practise to deceive.’

No one, in fact, is capable of fully appreciating the ultimate expediency of a devoted adherence to Truth, save the divine Being, who is ‘the Truth;’ because He alone comprehends the whole of the vast and imperfectly-revealed scheme of Providence, and alone can see the inmost recesses of the human heart, and alone can foresee and judge of the remotest consequences of human actions.

ESSAY VII. OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

THE joys of parents are secret, and so are their griefs and fears; they cannot utter the one, nor they will not¹ utter the other. Children sweeten labours, but they make misfortunes more bitter; they increase the cares of life, but they mitigate the remembrance of death. The perpetuity by generation is common to beasts; but memory, merit, and noble works, are proper to men—and surely a man shall see the noblest works and foundations have proceeded from childless men, which have sought to express the images of their minds, where those of their bodies have failed—so the care of posterity is most in them that have no posterity. They that are the first raisers of their houses are most indulgent towards their children, beholding them as the continuance, not only of their kind, but of their work; and so both children and creatures.

The difference in affection of parents towards their several children is many times unequal, and sometimes unworthy, especially in the mother; as Solomon saith, ‘A wise son rejoiceth the father, but an ungracious son shames the mother.’² A man shall see, where there is a house full of children, one or two of the eldest respected, and the youngest made wantons; but in the midst some that are as it were forgotten, who, many times, nevertheless, prove the best. The illiberality of parents, in allowance towards their children, is a harmful³ error, and makes them base, acquaints them with shifts, makes them sort⁴ with mean company, and makes them surfeit more when they come to plenty; and therefore the proof is best⁵ when men keep their authority towards their children, but not their purse. Men have a foolish manner (both parents, and schoolmasters, and servants), in creating and breeding an emulation between brothers

¹ Nor they will not. *Nor will they.*

² *Proverbs x. i.*

³ Harmful. *Pernicious.*

‘Sleepy poppies harmful harvests yield.’—*Dryden.*

⁴ Sort. *To associate with; to consort.* ‘Metals sort and herd with other metals in the earth.’—*Woodward.*

⁵ The proof is best. *The safest course.*

during childhood, which many times sorteth¹ to discord when they are men, and disturbeth families. The Italians make little difference between children and nephews, or near kinsfolk ; but so they be of the lump they care not, though they pass not through their own body—and, to say truth, in nature it is much a like matter : insomuch that we see a nephew sometimes resembleth an uncle, or a kinsman, more than his own parents, as the blood happens. Let parents chuse betimes the vocations and courses they mean their children should take, for then they are most flexible ; and let them not too much apply themselves to the disposition of their children, as thinking they will take best to that which they have most mind to. It is true, that if the affection,² or aptness, of the children be extraordinary, then it is good not to cross it ; but generally the precept is good, ‘Optimum elige, suave et facile illud faciet consuetudo.’³ Younger brothers are commonly fortunate, but seldom or never where the elder are disinherited.

ANNOTATIONS.

‘*Let parents chuse betimes the vocations and courses they mean their children should take. . . . And let them not too much apply themselves to the disposition of their children.*’

It is only in very rare and extreme cases that Bacon allows the inclination of children to be followed in the choice of a profession. But he surely makes too little allowance (and, perhaps, the majority of parents do so) for the great diversity of natural faculties. It is not only such marvellous geniuses as occur but in five out of a million, that will succeed in one course far better than in any other. Numbers of men who would never attain any extraordinary eminence in anything, are

¹ Sort. *To issue in* (from sortir).

‘All my pains is *sorted* to no proof.’—*Shakespeare*.

² Affection. *Strong inclination to*. ‘All the precepts of Christianity command us to temper our *affections* towards all things below.’—*Temple*.

³ ‘Chuse the best, and custom will render it agreeable and easy.’

yet so constituted as to make a very respectable figure in the department that is suited for them, and to fall below mediocrity in a different one.

The world has been compared by some one to a board covered with holes of many various shapes, and pegs fitted for each, but which are scattered about at random, so that it is a mere chance whether a peg falls into the hole that fits it.

A. B. was the son of a schoolmaster who had a great love of literature. The son had a perfect hatred of it, and was a mere dunce at his book. Various attempts were made, which proved perfect failures, to train him to some of what are called the learned professions; and he was, to all appearance, turning out what they call a 'ne'er-do-weel.' As a last resource he was sent out to a new colony. There he was in his element; for, when at school, though dull at learning and soon forgetting what he had read, he never saw a horse nor a carriage, once, that he did not readily recognise; and he really understood all that belonged to each. In the colony he became one of the most thriving settlers; skilful in making roads, erecting mills, draining, cattle-breeding, &c., and was advanced to a situation of trust in the colony. And it is worth remarking that he became a very steady and well-conducted man, having been before the reverse. For it adds greatly to a young man's temptations to fall into habits of idleness and dissipation, if he is occupied in some pursuit in which he despairs of success, and for which he has a strong disinclination.

C. D., again, was at a university, and was below the average in all academical pursuits; but he was the greatest mechanical genius in the university; not excepting the professors. He never examined any machine, however complex, that he could not with his own hands construct a model of it, and sometimes with improvements. He would have made a first-rate engineer; but family arrangements caused him to take Orders. He was a diligent and conscientious clergyman, but a dull and commonplace one; except that, in repairing, and altering, and fitting up his parsonage and his church, he was unrivalled. In this sense no one could be more *edifying*.

When, however, a youth is supposed to have, and believes himself to have, a great *turn* for such and such a profession, you should make sure that he understands what the profession is,

and has faculties for what it really does require. A youth, *e.g.*, who is anxious to enter the Navy, and thinks only of sailing about to various countries, having an occasional brush with an enemy, and leading altogether a jolly life, without any notion of the study, and toils, and privations he will have to go through, should have his views corrected.

E. F. was thought by his friends to have made this mistake; and when, at his earnest entreaty, he was sent to sea, they secretly begged the captain to make his life as unpleasant as possible: being anxious to sicken him. He was accordingly snubbed, and rated, and set to the most laborious duties, and never commended or encouraged. But he bore all, and did all, with unflinching patience and diligence. At last the captain revealed the whole to him, saying, 'I can carry on this disguise no longer; you are the finest young man I ever had under me, and I have long admired your conduct while I pretended to scold you.' But perhaps part of his good conduct may have sprung from the cause which Bacon alludes to in the last sentence of his Essay on 'Marriage.'

G. H., who had, as a youth, a vehement longing to go to sea, was positively interdicted by his father. Hence, though possessing very good abilities, and not without aspirations after excellence, he never could be brought to settle down steadily to anything, but broke off from every promising pursuit that he was successively engaged in, in pursuit of some phantom.

It is observable that a parent who is unselfish, and who is never thinking of personal inconvenience, but always of the children's advantage, will be likely to make them selfish; for she will let that too plainly appear, so as to fill the child with an idea that everything is to give way to him, and that his concerns are an ultimate end. Nay, the very pains taken with him in strictly controlling him, heightens his idea of his own vast importance; whereas a parent who is selfish will be sure to accustom the child to sacrifice his own convenience, and to understand that he is of much less importance than the parent. This, by the way, is only one of many cases in which selfishness is caught from those who have least of it.

ESSAY VIII. OF MARRIAGE AND SINGLE LIFE.

HE that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men, which, both in affection and means, have married and endowed the public. Yet it were great reason that those that have children should have greatest care of future times, unto which they know they must transmit their dearest pledges. Some there are, who, though they lead a single life, yet their thoughts do end with themselves, and account future times impertinencies;¹ nay, there are some other that account wife and children but as bills of charges;² nay, more, there are some foolish rich covetous men that take a pride in having no children, because they may be thought so much the richer; for, perhaps, they have heard some talk, 'Such a one is a great rich man,' and another except to it, 'Yea, but he hath a great charge of children,' as if it were an abatement to his riches. But the most ordinary cause of a single life is liberty, especially in certain self-pleasing and humorous³ minds, which are so sensible of every restraint, as⁴ they will go near to think their girdles and garters to be bonds and shackles. Unmarried men are best friends, best masters, best servants, but not always best subjects,

¹ Impertinencies. *Things wholly irrelevant; things of little or no importance.*

'O matter and impertinency mixed,
Reason and madness.'—*Shakespeare.*

'There are many subtle *impertinences* learnt in schools.'—*Watts.*

² Charges. *Cost; expense.*

'I'll be at *charges* for a looking-glass,
And entertain a score or two of tailors.'—*Shakespeare.*

³ Humorous. *Governed by one's own fancy or predominant inclination.*

'I am known to be a *humorous* patrician.'—*Shakespeare.*

'He that would learn to pass a just sentence upon men and things, must beware of a fanciful temper, and a *humorous* conduct in affairs.'—*Watts.*

'Or self-conceited, play the *humorous* Platonist.'—*Drayton.*

⁴ As. *That.* See page 26.

for they are light to run away, and almost all fugitives are of that condition. A single life doth well with churchmen, for charity will hardly water the ground where it must first fill a pool. It is indifferent for judges and magistrates; for if they be facile and corrupt, you shall have a servant five times worse than a wife. For soldiers, I find the generals commonly, in their hortatives, put men in mind of their wives and children: and I think the despising of marriage among the Turks maketh the vulgar soldier more base. Certainly wife and children are a kind of discipline of humanity: and single men, though they be many times more charitable, because their means are less exhaust,¹ yet, on the other side, they are more cruel and hard-hearted (good to make severe inquisitors), because their tenderness is not so oft called upon. Grave natures, led by custom, and therefore constant, are commonly loving husbands, as was said of Ulysses, ‘*Vetulam suam prætulit immortalitati.*’² Chaste women are often proud and froward, as presuming upon the merit of their chastity. It is one of the best bonds, both of chastity and obedience, in the wife, if she thinks her husband wise, which she will never do if she find him jealous. Wives are young men’s mistresses, companions for middle age, and old men’s nurses, so as a man may have a quarrel³ to marry when he will; but yet he was reputed one of the wise men that made answer to the question when a man should marry—‘A young man not yet, an elder man not at all.’⁴ It is often seen that bad husbands have very good wives; whether it be that it raiseth the price of their husband’s kindness when it comes, or that the wives take a pride in their patience; but this never fails, if the bad husbands were of their own chusing, against their friends’ consent; for then they will be sure to make good their own folly.

¹ Exhaust. *Exhausted.*

‘The wealth
Of the Canaries was *exhaust*, the health
Of his good Majesty to celebrate.’—*Habington.*

² ‘He preferred his old woman to immortality.’—Plut. *Gryll.* 1.

³ Quarrel. *A reason; a plea.* (Perhaps, from Quare, wherefore, used in law for a plea in trespass.) Or perhaps this oldest use of it for reason or plea, is the original meaning of querela, retained in querulous—putting forth a pitiful plea.

‘He thought he had a good *quarrel* to attack him.’—*Holinshead.*

⁴ Thales. *Vid. Diog. Laert.* i. 26.

ANTITHETA ON WIFE AND CHILDREN.

PRO.

'Charitas reipublicæ incipit a familia.

'The love of country has its rise in family affection.'

'Uxor et liberi disciplina quædam humanitatis; at cælibes tetrici et severi.

'A wife and children are a sort of training in courtesy and kindliness; while single men, on the other hand, are hard and severe.'

'Cælibatus et orbitas ad nil aliud conferunt, quam ad fugam.

'Celibacy and absence of kindred are a qualification only for flight.'

CONTRA.

'Qui uxorem duxit, et liberos suscepit, obsides fortunæ dedit.

'He that has a wife and children has given hostages to fortune.'

'Brutorum eternitas soboles; virorum fama, merita, et instituta.

'The perpetuation of brutes is offspring; but that of man is their glory, their deserts, and their institutions.'

'Economicæ rationes publicas plerunque evertunt.

'Family considerations often overthrow public ones.'

ANNOTATIONS.

It is remarkable that Bacon does not at all advert to the notion of the superior holiness of a single life, or to the enforced celibacy of the Roman-catholic clergy.

It is hardly necessary to remark—much less to prove—that, even supposing there were some spiritual advantage in celibacy, it ought to be completely voluntary from day to day, and not to be enforced by a life-long vow or rule. For in this case, even though a person should not repent of such a vow, no one can be sure that there is not such repentance. Supposing that even a large majority of priests, and monks, and nuns, have no desire to marry, every one of them may not unreasonably be suspected of such a desire; and no one of them, consequently, can be secure against the most odious suspicions. It has been alleged, in reply to this, that the like reasoning would apply to the case of the *marriage contract*, since no one can be sure that a married couple may not repent of their union. To the most rightminded persons, the answer would at once occur, that there is a wide difference between any merely human institution, and one that has an express divine sanction: 'what God hath joined together, let not Man put asunder.' This distinction, however, would not be recognised by those who put the decrees of a (supposed) infallible Church on a level with Scripture. But even these may perceive that the permanence of the marriage-tie

is *necessary* for the due care of offspring—for the comfort of married life itself—and for the morality and welfare of society. And that there is no such necessity for the enforced celibacy of the clergy, is proved, not only by the experience of *all* Churches except that of Rome, but by the admission of that very Church itself; since it dispenses with the rule in favour of the clergy of the Eastern Churches.

No doubt there are many Roman-catholic clergymen (as there are Protestant) who sincerely prefer celibacy. But, in the one case we have a ground of assurance of this, which is wanting in the other. No one can be sure, because no proof can be given, that a vow of perpetual celibacy may not some time or other be a matter of regret. But he who continues to live single while continuing to have a free choice, gives a fair evidence of a continued preference for that life.¹

Accordingly, many of the most intelligent of the Roman-catholic laity are very desirous of having the law of celibacy removed. It is not reckoned an article of the faith, but merely a matter of discipline. And accordingly, those of the Greek and Armenian Churches who have consented to acknowledge Romish supremacy, have been allowed to retain their own practice as to this matter; the Armenian Church *allowing* the marriage of their priests, and the Greek Church *requiring* the parish priests to be married.

When this was urged by an intelligent Roman-catholic layman, to the late Archbishop Murray, he replied that but few Armenian priests do avail themselves of their privilege. This, answered the other, is a strong reason on my side; for the

¹ It is worth observing, by the way, that if any one should maintain that enforced celibacy of the clergy is essential to such an unrestricted intercourse as is, on religious grounds, desirable between the pastor and the females of his flock, and should allege that a clergyman to whom marriage is permitted could not have any confidential communication with them, for fear of exciting rumours of some matrimonial designs—if any one should maintain this, he would hardly be thought serious. He would be answered—if, indeed, he were considered worth an answer—that the reasonable inference is the very opposite. Any groundless rumours of a tender attachment between parties who were *free* to marry, would be put an end to by their *not* marrying. But if their marriage were prohibited by law, it would be necessary to avoid any such intimacy as might possibly lead to the existence, or to the suspicion, of that sort of attachment which would naturally lead to matrimony. But it is remarkable that many persons to whom all this is quite clear, yet use, in a precisely parallel case, the very same kind of reasoning which, in this case, they would deride.—See *Remains of Bishop Copleston*, p. 42.

advantage which you think there is in an unmarried priesthood is secured in a great majority of instances, with the very great additional advantage that their celibacy is there understood to be completely voluntary.

But doubtless the Romish hierarchy have been much influenced by the consideration which Bacon mentions, that 'single men are the best servants.' It was wished to keep the clergy, who are the employed servants of the Roman Church, as distinct as possible from the Body of the people.

In the Greek Church, though every parish priest must be a married man, the bishops never are, being always taken from among the monks. The result of this is (1.) that the parish priests, since they cannot rise any higher, are regarded as an inferior order of men; and, according to the testimony of all travellers, are a very low set. And (2.) the bishop who has to govern, through the medium of the priests, all the parishes of his diocese, is necessarily a person destitute of all *experience*. It is as if the command of a fleet were given (as is sometimes done by the Russians) to a military officer.

A parish priest in the Greek Church, if his wife dies, is permanently suspended. For none can officiate who is not married; and he is not allowed to marry again. It is thus they interpret, as some Protestant divines also have done (besides Doctor Primrose), the rule that he is to be 'the husband of one wife.'

The rule is manifestly and confessedly of doubtful interpretation; some understanding it of a prohibition merely of polygamy; and others, as relating merely to conjugal fidelity. This last has more to be said in its favour than would appear from our translation; on account of the double meaning in the original *Γυνή*, and also of *Ανὴρ*, in Greek, and *Vir* in Latin.

It has been urged against this interpretation, that such a rule would have been superfluous; but surely the same might be said against the rule that the deacon should be 'no striker,' and 'not given to much wine.'

ESSAY IX. OF ENVY.

THERE be none of the affections which have been noted to fascinate or bewitch, but love and envy; they both have vehement wishes; they frame themselves readily into imaginations and suggestions, and they come easily into the eye, especially upon the presence of the objects; which are the points that conduce to fascination, if any such thing there be. We see, likewise, the Scripture calleth envy 'an evil eye;' and the astrologers call the evil influences of the stars evil *aspects*; so that still there seemeth to be acknowledged, in the act of envy, an ejaculation¹ or irradiation of the eye; nay, some have been so curious² as to note, that the times when the stroke or percussion of an envious eye doth most hurt, are when the party envied is beheld in glory or triumph; for that sets an edge upon envy; and, besides, at such times, the spirits of the person envied do come forth most into the outward parts, and so meet the blow.

But leaving these curiosities³ (though not unworthy to be thought on in fit place), we will handle⁴ what persons are apt to envy others; what persons are most subject to be envied themselves; and what is the difference between public and private envy.

A man that hath no virtue in himself ever envieth virtue in others—for men's minds will either feed upon their own good, or upon others' evil; and who⁵ wanteth the one will prey upon

¹ Ejaculation. *The act of throwing or darting out.* 'Which brief prayers of our Saviour (*Matt.* xxvi. 39) are probably such as we call *ejaculation*—an elegant similitude from the shooting or throwing out a dart or arrow.'—*South.*

'Its active rays *ejaculated* thence,
Irradiate all the wide circumference.'—*Blackmore.*

² Curious. *Subtle; minutely inquiring; accurate; precise.* 'Both these senses embrace their objects with a more *curious* discrimination.'—*Holden.* 'Having inquired of the *curious*est and most observing makers of such tools.'—*Boyle.*

'For *curious* I cannot be with you.'—*Shakespeare.*

Ingenious. 'To devise *curious* works.'—*Exodus* xxxv. 32.

³ Curiosities. *Niceties.* 'Equalities are so weighed, that *curiosity* in neither can make choice of either's moiety.'—*Shakespeare.*

⁴ Handle. *To treat; to discuss.*

'He left nothing fitting for the purpose
Untouched or slightly *handled* in discourse.'—*Shakespeare.*

⁵ Who. *He who.* 'Who talks much, must talk in vain.'—*Gay.*

the other; and whoso¹ is out of hope to attain another's virtue, will seek to come at even hand, by depressing another's fortune.

A man that is busy and inquisitive is commonly envious; for to know much of other men's matters cannot be because all that ado² may concern his own estate; therefore it must needs be that he taketh a kind of play-pleasure in looking upon the fortunes of others; neither can he that mindeth but his own business find much matter for envy; for envy is a gadding passion, and walketh the streets, and doth not keep home; 'Non est curiosus, quin idem sit malevolus.'³

Men of noble birth are noted to be envious towards new men when they rise: for the distance is altered; and it is like a deceit of the eye, that when others come on they think themselves go back.

Deformed persons, and eunuchs, and old men, and bastards, are envious; for he that cannot possibly mend his own case, will do what he can to impair another's; except these defects light upon a very brave and heroical nature, which thinketh to make his natural wants part of his honour; in that it should be said, 'That an eunuch, or a lame man, did such great matters;' affecting⁴ the honour of a miracle; as it was in Narses the eunuch, and Agesilaus and Tamerlane, that were lame men.

The same is the case of men who rise after calamities and misfortunes: for they are as men fallen out with the times, and think other men's harms a redemption of their own sufferings.

They that desire to excel in too many matters, out of levity and vain glory, are ever envious, for they cannot want work—it being impossible but many, in some one of those things, should surpass them; which was the character of Adrian the emperor,⁵ that mortally envied poets and painters, and artificers in works wherein he had a vein⁶ to excel.

Lastly, near kinsfolks and fellows in office, and those that

¹ Whoso. *Whoever*. 'Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me.'—*Ps.* l. 23.

² Ado. *Bustle*—really the infinitive mood of a verb equivalent to the expression 'to do.'—Used in the plural *adoes* in the old Scottish Acts of Parliament.—*Rev. H. Cotton*.

'Let's follow, to see the end of this *ado*.'

'Much *Ado* about Nothing.'—*Shakespeare*.

³ 'There is none curious that is not also *malevolent*.'—*Cf. Plut. de Curios.* 1.

⁴ Affecting. See page 1.

⁵ *Spartian. Vit. Adrian.* 15.

⁶ Vein. *Humour; fancy*.

'Thou troublest me; I am not in the *vein*.'—*Shakespeare*.

are bred together, are more apt to envy their equals when they are raised; for it doth upbraid unto them their own fortunes, and pointeth at them, and cometh oftener into their remembrance, and incurreth¹ likewise more into the note of others; and envy ever redoubleth from speech and fame. Cain's envy was the more vile and malignant towards his brother Abel, because, when his sacrifice was better accepted, there was nobody to look on. Thus much for those that are apt to envy.

Concerning those that are more or less subject to envy. First, persons of eminent virtue, when they are advanced, are less envied; for their fortune seemeth but due unto them; and no man envieth the payment of a debt, but rewards and liberality rather. Again, envy is ever joined with the comparing of a man's self; and where there is no comparison, no envy—and therefore kings are not envied but by kings. Nevertheless, it is to be noted that unworthy persons are most envied at their first coming in, and afterwards overcome it better; whereas, contrarywise,² persons of worth and merit are most envied when their fortune continueth long; for by that time, though their virtue be the same, yet it hath not the same lustre; for fresh men grow up to darken it.

Persons of noble blood are less envied in their rising, for it seemeth but right done to their birth: besides, there seemeth not much added to their fortune; and envy is as the sunbeams, that beat hotter upon a bank, or steep rising ground, than upon a flat; and, for the same reason, those that are advanced by degrees are less envied than those that are advanced suddenly, and 'per saltum.'³

Those that have joined with their honour great travels, cares, or perils, are less subject to envy; for men think that they earn their honours hardly, and pity them sometimes, and pity ever healeth envy: wherefore you shall observe, that the more deep and sober sort of politic persons, in their greatness, are ever bemoaning themselves what a life they lead, chanting a 'quanta patimur';⁴ not that they feel it so, but only to abate

¹ Incur. *To press on.* 'The mind of man is helped or hindered in its operations according to the different quality of external objects that incur into the senses.'—*South.*

² Contrarywise. *On the contrary.*

³ 'At a bound.'

⁴ 'How much we suffer!'

the edge of envy: but this is to be understood of business that is laid upon men, and not such as they call unto themselves; for nothing increaseth envy more than an unnecessary and ambitious engrossing of business—and nothing doth extinguish envy more than for a great person to preserve all other inferior officers in their full rights and pre-eminences of their places; for, by that means, there be so many screens between him and envy.

Above all, those are most subject to envy which carry the greatness of their fortunes in an insolent and proud manner—being never well but while they are showing how great they are, either by outward pomp, or by triumphing over all opposition or competition: whereas wise men will rather do sacrifice to envy, in suffering themselves, sometimes of¹ purpose, to be crossed and overborne in things that do not much concern them. Notwithstanding, so much is true, that the carriage of greatness in a plain and open manner (so it be without arrogancy² and vain-glory), doth draw less envy than if it be in a more crafty and cunning fashion; for in that course a man doth but disavow fortune, and seemeth to be conscious of his own want in worth, and doth but teach others to envy him.

Lastly, to conclude this part, as we said in the beginning that the act of envy had somewhat in it of witchcraft, so there is no other cure of envy but the cure of witchcraft; and that is, to remove the lot (as they call it), and to lay it upon another; for which purpose, the wiser sort of great persons bring in ever upon the stage somebody upon whom to derive³ the envy that would come upon themselves; sometimes upon ministers and servants, sometimes upon colleagues and associates, and the like; and, for that turn, there are never wanting some persons of violent and undertaking⁴ natures, who, so they may have power and business, will take it at any cost.

Now, to speak of public envy. There is yet some good in

¹ Of. *By; of purpose; by design; intentionally.* 'They do of right belong to you.'—*Tillotson.*

² Arrogancy. *Arrogance.* 'Let not arrogancy come out of your mouth.'—*1 Samuel xi.*

³ Derive. *To divert; to turn the course of.* 'Company abates the torrent of a common odium by deriving it into many channels.'—*South.*

⁴ Undertaking. *Enterprising.* 'Men of renown, that is, of undertaking and adventurous natures.'—*Sir Walter Raleigh.*

public envy, whereas in private there is none; for public envy is as an ostracism, that eclipseth men when they grow too great; and therefore it is a bridle also to great ones to keep within bounds.

This envy, being in the Latin word 'invidia,' goeth in the modern languages by the name of discontentment, of which we shall speak in handling sedition. It is a disease in a State like to infection; for as infection spreadeth upon that which is sound, and tainteth it, so, when envy is gotten once into a State, it traduceth even the best actions thereof, and turneth them into an ill odour; and therefore there is little won by intermingling of plausible¹ actions; for that doth argue but a weakness and fear of envy, which hurteth so much the more; as it is likewise usual in infections, which, if you fear them, you call them upon you.

This public envy seemeth to bear chiefly upon principal officers or ministers, rather than upon kings and States themselves. But this is a sure rule, that if the envy upon the minister be great, when the cause of it in him is small, or if the envy be general in a manner upon all the ministers of an estate, then the envy (though hidden) is truly upon the State itself. And so much of public envy or discontentment, and the difference thereof from private envy, which was handled in the first place.

We will add this in general, touching the affection of envy, that of all other affections it is the most importune² and continual; for of other affections there is occasion given but now and then; and therefore it was well said, 'Invidia festos dies non agit,'³ for it is ever working upon some or other. And it is also noted, that love and envy do make a man pine, which other affections do not, because they are not so continual. It is also the vilest affection, and the most depraved; for which cause it is the proper attribute of the Devil, who is called 'The

¹ Plausible. *Deserving to meet with applause.* 'I hope they will *plausibly* receive our attempt.'—*Brown.*

² Importune. *Importunate; troublesome from frequency.*

³ More shall thy penitent sighs his endless mercy please
Than their *importune* suits which dreame that words God's wrath appease.'—*Surrey.*

³ 'Envy keeps no holidays.'

envious man, that soweth tares among the wheat by night ;' as it always cometh to pass, that envy worketh subtilly, and in the dark, and to the prejudice of good things, such as is the wheat.

ANTITHETA ON ENVY.

PRO.

'Invidia in rebuspublicis, tanquam salubris ostracismus.

'In public affairs, envy acts the part of a wholesome ostracism.'

CONTRA.

'Nemo virtuti invidiam reconciliaverit præter mortem.

'Nothing can reconcile envy to virtue but death.'

'Invidia virtutes laboribus exercet, ut Juno Herculem.

'Envy acts towards the virtues as Juno did towards Hercules; she condemns them to toilsome labours.'

 ANNOTATIONS.

'There seemeth to be acknowledged, in the act of envy, an ejaculation or irradiation of the eye.'

There is a curious passage on this subject in a very able article in the *North British Review* (Aug. 1857), which I will take the liberty of citing.

'We once, in Cairo, conversed on this superstition with an intelligent Cairene, who described it as the great curse of his country.

'Does the mischievous influence of the evil eye,' we asked, 'depend on the will of the person whose glance does the mischief?'

'Not altogether,' he answered. 'An intention to harm may render more virulent the poison of the glance; but envy, or the desire to appropriate a thing, or even excessive admiration, may render it hurtful without the consciousness, or even against the will, of the offender. It injures most the thing that it first hits. Hence the bits of red cloth that are stuck about the dresses of women, and about the trappings of camels and horses, and the large spots of lamp black which you may see on the foreheads of children. They are a sort of conductors. It is hoped that they will attract the glance, and exhaust its venom.'

“A fine house, fine furniture, a fine camel, and a fine horse, are all enjoyed with fear and trembling, lest they should excite envy and bring misfortune. A butcher would be afraid to expose fine meat, lest the evil eye of passers-by, who might covet it, should taint it, and make it spoil, or become unwholesome.’

“Children are supposed to be peculiarly the objects of desire and admiration. When they are suffered to go abroad, they are intentionally dirty and ill-dressed; but generally they are kept at home, without air or exercise, but safe from admiration. This occasions a remarkable difference between the infant mortality in Europe and in Egypt. In Europe it is the children of the rich who live; in Egypt, it is the children of the poor. The children of the poor cannot be confined. They live in the fields. As soon as you quit the city, you see in every clover field a group, of which the centre is a tethered buffalo, and round it are the children of its owner, with their provision of bread and water, sent thither at sunrise and to remain there till sunset, basking in the sun, and breathing the air from the desert. The Fellah children enter their hovels only to sleep, and that only in the winter. In summer, their days and nights are passed in the open air; and, notwithstanding their dirt and their bad food, they grow up healthy and vigorous. The children of the rich, confined by the fear of the evil eye to the ‘hareem,’ are puny creatures, of whom not a fourth part reaches adolescence. Achmed Pasha Tahir, one of the governors of Cairo under Mehemet Ali, had 280 children; only six survived him. Mehemet Ali himself had 87; only ten were living at his death.

“I believe,’ he added, ‘that at the bottom of this superstition is an enormous prevalence of envy among the lower Egyptians. You see it in all their fictions. Half of the stories told in the coffee-shops by the professional story-tellers, of which the *Arabian Nights* are a specimen, turn on malevolence. Malevolence, not attributed, as it would be in European fiction, to some insult or injury inflicted by the person who is its object, but to mere envy: envy of wealth, or of the other means of enjoyment, honourably acquired and liberally used.’ (Pages 10-11.)

‘Those that are advanced by degrees, are less envied than those that are advanced suddenly.’

In Adam Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, the following admirable remarks are made on the envy that attends a sudden rise :—

‘The man who, by some sudden revolution of fortune, is lifted up all at once into a condition of life greatly above what he had formerly lived in, may be assured that the congratulations of his best friends are not all of them perfectly sincere. An upstart, though of the greatest merit, is generally disagreeable, and a sentiment of envy commonly prevents us from heartily sympathizing with his joy. If he has any judgment, he is sensible of this, and instead of appearing to be elated with his good fortune, he endeavours, as much as he can, to smother his joy, and keep down that elevation of mind with which his new circumstances naturally inspire him. He affects the same plainness of dress, and the same modesty of behaviour, which became him in his former station. He redoubles his attention to his old friends, and endeavours more than ever to be humble, assiduous, and complaisant. And this is the behaviour which in his situation we must approve of; because we expect, it seems, that he should have more sympathy with our envy and aversion to his happiness, than we have with his happiness. It is seldom that with all this he succeeds. We suspect the sincerity of his humility, and he grows weary of this constraint. In a little time, therefore, he generally leaves all his old friends behind him, some of the meanest of them excepted, who may, perhaps, condescend to become his dependents: nor does he always acquire any new ones; the pride of his new connections is as much affronted at finding him their equal, as that of his old ones had been by his becoming their superior: and it requires the most obstinate and persevering modesty to atone for this mortification to either. He generally grows weary too soon, and is provoked, by the sullen and suspicious pride of the one, and by the saucy contempt of the other, to treat the first with neglect, and the second with petulance, till at last he grows habitually insolent, and forfeits the esteem of all. If the chief part of human happiness arises from the consciousness of being beloved, as I believe it does, those sudden changes of fortune

seldom contribute much to happiness. He is happiest who advances more gradually to greatness ; whom the Public destines to every step of his preferment long before he arrives at it ; in whom, upon that account, when it comes, it can excite no extravagant joy, and with regard to whom it cannot reasonably create either any jealousy in those he overtakes, or any envy in those he leaves behind.¹

Doubtless it is nothing very uncommon for a man who has been greatly elevated, to slight his former friends. But far more common (as a knowledge of human nature would lead one to expect) is the converse case, of the man's former friends gradually drawing back from *him*. And yet this latter case has been hardly ever noticed, while the other has been often described and dwelt on. This, however, is easily accounted for. Those who are themselves in low estate (who are incomparably the more numerous class) are much more likely to sympathize with the one of these grievances than the other.

'Persons of eminent virtue, when they are advanced, are less envied.'

Bacon might have remarked that, in one respect a rise by merit exposes a man to more envy than that by personal favour, through family connection, private friendship, &c. For, in this latter case, the *system* itself of preferring private considerations to public, is chiefly blamed, but the *individual* thus advanced is regarded much in the same way as one who is *born* to an estate or a title. But when any one is advanced on the score of desert and qualifications, the system is approved, but the individual is more envied, because his advancement is felt as an affront to all who think themselves or their own friends more worthy. 'It is quite right to advance men of great merit ; but by this rule, it is I, or my friend So-and-so that should have been preferred.' When, on the other hand, a bishop or a minister appoints his own son or private friend to some office, every one else is left free to think 'If it had gone by merit, I should have been the man.'

When any person of really eminent virtue becomes the object

¹ Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, chap. v.

of envy, the clamour and abuse by which he is assailed, is but the sign and accompaniment of his success in doing service to the Public. And if he is a truly wise man, he will take no more notice of it than the moon does of the howling of the dogs. Her only answer to them is 'to shine on.'

'This public envy seemeth to bear chiefly upon principal officers or ministers, rather than upon kings.'

This is a very just remark, and it might have suggested an important argument (touched on in the *Lessons on the British Constitution*¹) in favour of hereditary Royalty. It is surely a good thing that there should be some feeling of loyalty unalloyed by envy, towards *something* in the Government. And this feeling concentrates itself among us upon the Sovereign. But in a pure Republic, the abstract idea of the State—the Commonwealth itself—is too vague for the vulgar mind to take hold of with any loyal affection. The President, and every one of the public officers, has been raised from the ranks; and the very circumstance of their having been so raised on the score of supposed fitness, makes them (as was observed above) the more obnoxious to envy, because their elevation is felt as an affront to their rivals.

An hereditary Sovereign, on the other hand, if believed to possess personal merit, is regarded as a Godsend; but he does not hold his place by that tenure.

In Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, there is a Dissertation on Envy, Emulation, and Indignation (Nemesis), well worthy of Bacon; who certainly was carried away into an undue neglect and disparagement of Aristotle by the absurd idolatry of which he had been made the object.

'Conculcatur enim cupide nimis ante metutum.'

¹ See *Introductory Lessons on the British Constitution*, lesson i.

ESSAY X. OF LOVE.

THE stage is more beholding¹ to love than the life of Man ; for as to the stage, love is ever matter of comedies, and now and then of tragedies ; but in life it doth much mischief, sometimes like a syren, sometimes like a fury. You may observe, that amongst all the great and worthy persons (whereof the memory remaineth, either ancient or recent), there is not one that hath been transported to the mad degree of love ; which shows that great spirits and great business do keep out this weak passion. You must except, nevertheless, Marcus Antonius, the half-partner of the empire of Rome, and Appius Claudius, the decemvir and lawgiver ; whereof the former was indeed a voluptuous man, and inordinate, but the latter was an austere and wise man : and therefore it seems (though rarely) that love can find entrance, not only in an open heart, but also into a heart well fortified, if watch be not well kept. It is a poor saying of Epicurus, ‘ Satis magnum alter alteri theatrum sumus,’² —as if a Man, made for the contemplation of heaven, and all noble objects, should do nothing but kneel before a little idol, and make himself a subject, though not of the mouth (as beasts are), yet of the eye, which was given him for higher purposes.

It is a strange thing to note the excess of this passion, and how it braves³ the nature and value of things, by this, that the speaking in a perpetual hyperbole is comely in nothing but in love ; neither is it merely in the phrase ; for whereas it hath been well said, ‘ That the arch flatterer, with whom all the petty flatterers have intelligence, is a man’s self : ’ certainly the lover is more ; for there was never a proud man thought so absurdly well of himself as the lover doth of the person loved ; and therefore it was well said, ‘ That it is impossible to love and be wise.’⁴ Neither doth this weakness appear to others only, and not to the party loved, but to the loved most of all, except the

¹ Beholding. *Beholden.*

² ‘ We are a sufficiently great spectacle to each other.’

³ Braves. *Decorates and extolls.*

⁴ ‘ Amare et sapere vix Deo conceditur.’—Pub. Syr. *Sent.* 15.

love be reciprocal; for it is a true rule, that love is ever rewarded either with the reciprocal, or with an inward or secret contempt; by how much more then, men ought to beware of this passion, which loseth not only other things, but itself. As for the other losses, the poet's relation doth well figure them: 'That he that preferreth Helena, quitted the gifts of Juno and Pallas;' for whosoever esteemeth too much of amorous affection, quitteth both riches and wisdom. This passion hath its floods in the very times of weakness, which are great prosperity and great adversity; though this latter hath been less observed; both which times kindle love, and make it more fervent, and therefore show it to be the child of folly. They do best who, if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarter,¹ and sever it wholly from their serious affairs and actions of life; for if it check² once with business, it troubleth men's fortunes, and maketh men that they can no ways³ be true to their own ends. I know not how, but martial men are given to love: I think it is, but as they are given to wine; for perils commonly ask to be paid in pleasures.⁴ There is in Man's nature a secret inclination and motion towards love of others, which, if it be not spent upon some one or a few, doth naturally spread itself towards many, and maketh men become humane and charitable, as it is seen sometimes in friars. Nuptial love maketh mankind; friendly love perfecteth it; but wanton love corrupteth and embaseth⁵ it.

¹ Quarter. *Proper place* (rarely used in the singular).

'Swift to their several *quarters* hasted then
The cumbrous elements.'—*Milton*.'

² Check with. *To interfere with; to clash with*. 'It was not comely or fitting that in prayers we should make a God or Saviour of any Saint in heaven; neither was it fitting to make them *check with* our Saviour.'—*Strype*, 1535.

³ No ways. *In any wise; by no means*. 'And being *no ways* a match for the fleet, we set sail to Athens.'—*Swift*.

⁴ It is remarked by Aristotle in his *Politics* that *warlike nations* are those who pay the highest regard to women. And this he suggests may have given rise to the fable of the love of Mars and Venus.

⁵ Embase. *Degrade*.

'Love did *embase* him
Into a kitchen-drudge.'—*Old Ballad*, 13th century.

ANNOTATIONS.

'The Stage is more beholding to Love than the life of Man.'

If Bacon had lived in our day, he would probably have appealed, in confirmation of his views, to our modern use of the words '*fond*,' and '*doting*,' which originally meant '*foolish*,' and are now applied to the passion of Love.

'Men ought to beware of this passion, which loseth not only other things, but itself.' . . . 'Whosoever esteemeth too much of amorous affection, quitteth both riches and wisdom.'

The following passage is extracted from an article on Miss Austen's novels, in the *Quarterly Review* (No. 24, p. 374) which was reprinted—through a mistake—in the *Remains* of Sir W. Scott, though it was not written by him.

'Bacon, in these days, would hardly have needed to urge so strongly the dethronement of the God of Love. The prevailing fault is not now, whatever it may have been, to sacrifice all for love :—

*'Venit enim magnum donandi parca juventus,
Nec tantum Veneris quantum studiosa culinæ.'*

Mischievous as is the extreme of sentimental enthusiasm, and a romantic and uncalculating extravagance of passion, it is not the one into which the young folks of the present day are the most likely to run. Prudential calculations are not indeed to be excluded in marriage: to disregard the advice of sober-minded friends on an important point of conduct is an imprudence we would by no means recommend; indeed, it is a species of selfishness, if, in listening only to the dictates of passion, a man sacrifices to its gratification the happiness of those most dear to him as well as his own; though it is not now-a-days the most prevalent form of selfishness. But it is no condemnation of a sentiment to say, that it becomes blameable when it interferes with duty, and is uncontrolled by conscience. The desire of riches, power, or distinction,—the taste for ease and comfort,—

are to be condemned when they transgress these bounds; and love, if it keep within them, even though it be somewhat tinged with enthusiasm, and a little at variance with what the worldly call prudence,—that is, regard for pecuniary advantage,—may afford a better moral discipline to the mind than most other passions. It will not, at least, be denied, that it has often proved a powerful stimulus to exertion, where others have failed, and has called forth talents unknown before, even to the possessor. What though the pursuit may be fruitless, and the hopes visionary? The result may be a real and substantial benefit, though of another kind; the vineyard may have been cultivated by digging in it for the treasure which is never to be found. What though the perfections with which imagination has decorated the beloved object, may, in fact, exist but in a slender degree? Still they are believed in and admired as real; if not, the love is such as does not merit the name; and it is proverbially true that men become assimilated to the character (that is, what they *think* the character) of the Being they fervently adore. Thus (as in the noblest exhibitions of the stage), though that which is contemplated be but a fiction, it may be realized in the mind of the beholder; and, though grasping at a cloud, he may become worthy of possessing a real goddess. Many a generous sentiment, and many a virtuous resolution, have been called forth and matured by admiration of one, who may herself, perhaps, have been incapable of either. It matters not what the object is that a man aspires to be worthy of, and proposes as a model of imitation, if he does but *believe* it to be excellent. Moreover, all doubts of success (and they are seldom, if ever, entirely wanting) must either produce or exercise humility; and the endeavour to study another's interests and inclinations, and prefer them to one's own, may promote a habit of general benevolence which may outlast the present occasion. Everything, in short, which tends to abstract a man in any degree, or in any way, from self—from self-admiration and self-interest,—has, so far at least, a beneficial influence on character.'

The effect of mere familiar intercourse in dispelling the visions of a fancy-founded love, is well described by Crabbe in one of the *Tales of the Hall*, the 'Natural Death of Love.'

A like effect, resulting from a wider acquaintance with the world, and intercourse with superior persons, is described in a still better poem (which if not by Crabbe also, is a most admirable imitation of him in his happiest vein), entitled, 'A Common Tale,' which appeared first in a Periodical called *The True Briton*, and afterwards in a little book called the *Medley*.¹

¹ Published by Messrs. Smith, in the Strand.

ESSAY XI. OF GREAT PLACE.

MEN in great place are thrice servants—servants of the sovereign or State, servants of fame, and servants of business; so as¹ they have no freedom, neither² in their persons, nor² in their actions, nor in their times. It is a strange desire to seek power and to lose liberty, or to seek power over others, and to lose power over a man's self. The rising unto place is laborious, and by pains men come to greater pains; and it is sometimes base, and by indignities³ men come to dignities. The standing is slippery, and the regress is either a downfall, or at least an eclipse, which is a melancholy thing: 'Cum non sis qui fueris, non esse cur velis vivere.'⁴ Nay, men cannot retire when they would, neither will they when it were reason,⁵ but are impatient of privateness,⁶ even in age and sickness, which require the shadow;⁷ like old townsmen, that will be still sitting at their street door, though thereby they offer age to scorn. Certainly great persons had need to borrow other men's opinions to think themselves happy; for if they judge by their own feeling, they cannot find it; but if they think with themselves what other men think of them, and that other men would fain be as they are, then they are happy as it were by report, when, perhaps, they find the contrary within; for they are the first that find their own griefs, though they be the last that find their own faults. Certainly, men in great fortunes are strangers to themselves, and while they are in the puzzle of business, they have no time to tend their health, either of body or mind: 'Illi

¹ As. *That*. See page 26.

² Neither, nor—for *either*, or.

³ Indignity. *Meanness*.

'Fie on the pelf for which good name is sold,
And honour with *indignity* debased.'—*Spenser*.

⁴ 'Since thou art no longer what thou wast, there is no reason why thou shouldst wish to live.'

⁵ Reason. *Right; reasonable*. 'It is not *reason* that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.'—*Acts* vi. 2.

⁶ Privateness. *Privacy; retirement*. 'He drew him into the fatal circle from a resolved *privateness* at his house, when he would well have bent his mind to a retired course.'—*Wotton*.

⁷ Shadow. *Shade*.

'Here, father, take the *shadow* of this tree
For your good host.'—*Shakespeare*.

mors gravis incubat, qui notus nimis omnibus, ignotus moritur sibi.¹

In place there is licence to do good and evil, whereof the latter is a curse; for in evil, the best condition is not to will,² the second not to can.³ But power to do good is the true and lawful end of aspiring; for good thoughts, though God accept⁴ them, yet towards men are little better than good dreams, except they be put in act, and that cannot be without power and place, as the vantage and commanding ground. Merit and good works is the end of man's motion, and conscience⁵ of the same is the accomplishment of man's rest; for if a man can be a partaker of God's theatre, he shall likewise be partaker of God's rest: 'Et conversus Deus, ut aspiceret opera, quæ fecerunt manus suæ, vidit quod omnia essent bona nimis;⁶ and then the Sabbath.

In the discharge of thy place set before thee the best examples, for imitation is a globe⁷ of precepts; and after a time set before thee thine own example, and examine thyself strictly whether thou didst not best at first. Neglect not also the examples of those that have carried themselves ill in the same place; not to set off thyself by taxing their memory, but to direct thyself what to avoid. Reform, therefore, without bravery,⁸ or scandal of former times and persons; but yet set it down to thyself, as well to create good precedents as to follow them. Reduce things to the first institution, and observe wherein and how they have degene-

¹ 'Death falls heavily upon him, who, too well known to all men, dies unacquainted with himself.'—Senec. *Thyest.* xi. 401.

² To will. *To be willing; to desire.* 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God,'—*John* vii. 17.

³ To can. *To be able; to have power.*

'Mecænas and Agrippa who can most with Cæsar.'—*Dryden.*

⁴ Accept. *To regard favourably.* 'In every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him.'—*Acts* x. 35.

⁵ Conscience. *Consciousness.* 'The reason why the simpler sort are moved with authority is the conscience of their own ignorances.'—*Hooker.*

⁶ 'When God turned to behold the works which his hand had made, He saw that they were all very good.'—*Genesis* i.

⁷ Globe. *A body.*

'Him around

A globe of fiery seraphim enclosed.—*Milton.*

⁸ Bravery. *Bravado; parade of defiance.*

'By Ashtaroth, thou shalt ere long lament
These *braveries* in iron.'—*Milton.*

rated; but yet ask counsel of both times—of the ancient time what is best, and of the latter time what is fittest. Seek to make thy course regular, that men may know beforehand what they may expect; but be not too positive and peremptory, and express thyself well when thou digressest from thy rule. Preserve the right of thy place, but stir not questions of jurisdiction; and rather assume thy right in silence, and *de facto*,¹ than voice² it with claims and challenges. Preserve likewise the rights of inferior places, and think it more honour to direct in chief than to be busy in all. Embrace and invite helps and advices touching the execution of thy place; and do not drive away such as bring thee information, as meddlers, but accept of them in good part.

The vices of authority are chiefly four: delays, corruption, roughness, and facility. For delays, give easy access; keep times appointed; go through with that which is in hand, and interlace not business but of necessity. For corruption, do not only bind thine own hands or thy servants' hands from taking, but bind the hands of suitors also from offering; for integrity used doth the one, but integrity professed, and with a manifest detestation of bribery, doth the other; and avoid not only the fault, but the suspicion. Whosoever is found variable, and changeth manifestly without manifest cause, giveth suspicion of corruption; therefore, always, when thou changest thine opinion or course, profess it plainly, and declare it, together with the reasons that move thee to change, and do not think to steal³ it. A servant or a favourite, if he be inward,⁴ and no other apparent cause of esteem, is commonly thought but a by-way to close corruption. For roughness, it is a needless cause of discontent: severity breedeth fear, but roughness breedeth hate. Even reproofs from authority ought to be grave, and not taunting. As for facility, it is worse than bribery, for bribes

¹ In fact. *Really; virtually.*

² Voice. *To assert; to declare.*

‘When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be.’—*Lovelace.*

³ Steal. *To do secretly.*

‘’Twere good to steal our marriage.’—*Shakespeare.*

⁴ Inward. *Intimate.*

‘Who is most inward with the noble duke.’—*Shakespeare.*

‘All my inward friends abhorred me.’—*Job xix. 19.*

come but now and then; but if importunity or idle respects¹ lead a man, he shall never be without; as Solomon saith, 'To respect persons it is not good, for such a man will transgress for a piece of bread.'

It is most true what was anciently spoken—'*A place showeth the man;*' and it showeth some to the better, and some to the worse. 'Omnium consensu, capax imperii, nisi imperasset,'² saith Tacitus of Galba; but of Vespasian he saith, 'Solus imperantium, Vespasianus mutatus in melius'³—though the one was meant of sufficiency, the other of manners and affection.⁴ It is an assured sign of a worthy and generous spirit, whom honour amends—for honour is, or should be, the place of virtue—and as in nature things move violently to their place, and calmly in their place, so virtue in ambition is violent, in authority settled and calm.

All rising to great place is by a winding stair; and if there be factions, it is good to side a man's self whilst he is in the rising, and to balance himself when he is placed. Use the memory of thy predecessor fairly and tenderly; for if thou dost not, it is a debt will surely be paid when thou art gone. If thou have colleagues, respect them; and rather call them when they look not for it, than exclude them when they have reason to look to be called. Be not too sensible or too remembering of thy place in conversation and private answers to suitors; but let it rather be said, 'When he sits in place, he is another man.'

ANTITHETA ON GREAT PLACE.

PRO.

* * * *

CONTRA.

'Dum honores appetimus, libertatem exuimus.

'While we are seeking for great place, we are stripping ourselves of liberty.'

¹ Respects. *Considerations; motives.* 'Whatsoever secret respects were likely to move them.'—Hooker.

'I would have doff'd all other respects.'—Shakespeare.

² 'One whom all would have considered fit for rule, if he had not ruled.'

³ 'Alone of all the emperors, Vespasian was changed for the better.'—Tacit. *Hist.* i. 9, 50.

⁴ Affection. *Disposition; general state of mind.*

'There grows
In my most ill composed affection, such
A stanchless avarice.'—Shakespeare.

PRO.

‘Honores faciunt et virtutes et vitia conspicua; itaque illas provocant, hæc refrænant.

‘Great place makes both virtues and vices conspicuous; accordingly it is an incentive to the one and restrains the other.’

‘Non novit quisquam, quantum in virtutis cursu profecerit; nisi honores ei campum præbeant apertum.

‘No one knows how far he has advanced on the road of virtue, unless public office affords him a field for action.’

* * * *

CONTRA.

‘Honores dant fere potestatem earum rerum, quas optima conditio est nolle, proxima non posse.

‘The things which are placed in a man’s power by high office, are, for the most part, such as it would be the best thing to want the wish, and the next best to want the power to do.’

‘Honorum ascensus arduus, statio lubrica, regressus præceps.

‘The ascent to high office is steep, the summit slippery, the descent precipitous.’

‘Qui in honore sunt, vulgi opinionem mutantur oportet, ut seipsos beatos putent.

‘Those who hold high office must borrow the view which the vulgar take of them, in order to think themselves happy.’

ANNOTATIONS.

A work entitled *The Bishop* (by the late Dr. Cooke Taylor, but without his name), contains so many appropriate remarks, that I take the liberty of giving several quotations from it. It consists of letters professed to be addressed to a recently-appointed Bishop.

‘Power to do good is the true and lawful end of aspiring.’

‘Two classes of men occupy high station; those whose time has been spent in thinking how it could be attained; and those who have mainly bestowed their attention on the use that should be made of it when attained. Were there no world but this, the conduct of the latter would justly be reckoned preposterous; they would be regarded as ‘seers of visions and dreamers of dreams.’ When, however, they do by chance find themselves preferred, they are not only well disposed but ready qualified to use their advantages rightly; for the art of true obedience is the best guide to the art of true command. On the contrary, he who has thought only of the means by which he might climb, however good his intentions, is generally somewhat abroad when he has completed the ascent. He is like those whom we frequently meet, that have spent the best part of their life in

making a fortune, and then do not know what to do with it. Eager to get up, they forget to determine the nature of the ground on which they stand, and they consider not how it is related to that which they desire to attain : when they have ascended, their former station is at too great a distance to be surveyed accurately, and the reciprocal influences cannot be understood, because one side is removed beyond the reach of observation.' (Page 329.)

'After a time set before thee thine own example.'

'There is a strong temptation to sacrifice the consciousness of individuality for the sympathy of the multitude. The peril of being seduced from our proper orbit is not less great, when we seek to join, than when we try to avoid others. There are those who are willing to err with Plato, and there are those who are unwilling to go right with Epicurus. A cause is not necessarily good because some good men have favoured it, nor necessarily bad because bad men have supported it; yet we all know that many well-meaning men voted against the abolition of the slave-trade, because it was advocated by some partisans of the French Revolution. . . .

'It might at first sight appear that the absurdities of party, so obvious to every thinking man, would render the adoption of a right course a matter of no very great difficulty; indeed, an aphorism is already provided for our guidance, which apparently is as simple and easy as the rule of party itself: 'Steer clear of both parties; hold the middle course.' But simple and sound as the maxim may appear, its validity will be greatly weakened by a close examination. Both parties are not absolutely wrong; each is partially wrong and partially right; to keep always equidistant from both is to keep away from the truths as well as from the falsehoods, and to expose yourself to the chance, or rather to the certainty, of being influenced by each in turn.

'It is impossible for a man to realize the fable of Mohammed's coffin, and remain for ever balanced between equipollent attractions; but he may oscillate like a pendulum between the two extremes. In such a case, he will yield to both parties, be duped by both, and be despised by all. The truly independent course is to act as if party had no existence; to follow that which is wisest and best in itself, irrespective of the side which

makes the loudest claim to the monopoly of goodness. No doubt, such a course will often approach, or rather be approached by, the orbit of one party at one time, and the other at another, just as each of them chances to come the nearer to what is really right. Nay more, as each party does possess some truth mingled with its falsehoods, it is perfectly possible to be identified with one of two bigoted and opposed parties on some special question, and to be similarly identified with the other party on a different question. . . .

‘These coincidences may be called the *Nodes* of the different orbits; and when they occur, the proper movements are most subject to disturbing influences. The attraction of party varies inversely as the square of the distance; when you are brought near a powerful and organized mass, there is a strong temptation to pass over the intervening space.’ (Pages 46-48.)

‘The demand on a great man’s liberality is greatly increased if he holds himself aloof from party; for this offence, forgiveness can only be purchased by a very lavish system of disbursements; and, after all, he must be prepared to find that every shilling bestowed by party-men is equivalent to his pound. . . . It is not necessary to dilate on the merits of prudent economy, but assuredly nowhere is such a virtue more indispensably required than when demands on expenditure are regulated, not by realities, but by imaginations.

‘Great as is the evil of having your expenditure of money and time measured by the imagination of persons who do not trouble themselves to investigate realities, the evil is fearfully aggravated by the diversity of objects to which each set of imaginings refers. Those who surround you seem to act literally on Swift’s advice to servants, each of whom is recommended to do his best in his own particular department, to spend the whole of his master’s property. Thus it is with your money and time; every person seems to expect that both should be bestowed on his favourite project to their extreme amount; and no one is disposed to take into account that there are other claims and demands which should not be abridged in their fair proportions. There will be a combination to entrap you into a practical exemplification of ‘the sophism of composition;’ men will say, you can afford this, that, or the other expense: forgetting that all together will ruin you.’ (Page 84.)

‘Reform, therefore, without bravery, or scandal of former times and persons ; but yet set it down to thyself, as well to create good precedents as to follow them.’

‘To warn a public man (says the author of *The Bishop*) of ordinary sense, against innovation, is just as idle as to warn him against taking physic ; he will have recourse to neither one nor the other, unless forced by necessity. The thing to be feared in both cases is, that he will delay the application of alteratives until the disease can only be cured by violent remedies. One of the finest mills in our manufacturing districts is also one of the oldest ; the machinery in it has always kept abreast with the progress of modern invention, but it has never been closed a single day for the purpose of renovation or repair. I asked its proprietor the explanation of so remarkable a phenomenon ; he gave it in one sentence, ‘I am always altering, but never changing.’ Men sometimes deal with institutions as Sir John Cutler did with his stockings ; they darn them with worsted until, from silken, they are changed into woollen, while the stupid owners persist in asserting their continued identity. The cry of ‘innovation’ belongs exclusively to the Duncery ; but reluctance to change is a feeling shared with them by sensible people.

‘Among the many fallacies of the day that pass unquestioned, there is none more general nor more fallacious than that innovation is popular ; the truth is, that a judicious innovator is likely to be, at least for a time, the most unpopular man in the universe ; he will be hated by those who are satisfied with old evils ; he will be disliked by the timid and the lazy, who dread the peril and the trouble of change ; and he will receive little favour from those most conscious of the evil, because his remedies will not act as a charm, and remove in an instant the accumulated ills of centuries. . . .

‘Some persons are not aware of the fact, that in all men the love of ease is far superior to the love of change ; in the serious concerns of life, novelty is never desired for its own sake ; then, habit becomes a second nature, and it is only the positive pressure of evil that can drive us to alteration. We do find men occasionally rash and insatiable in changing ; but this is only

from their being impatient under the sense of real evils, and in error as to remedies. The violent vicissitudes of the first French Revolution were not the result of a mad love of experiments; they were produced by the national bankruptcy of France, and the starving condition of the people of Paris. An ignorant man suffering under painful disease will try the prescription of every mountebank, and without waiting to see how one quack medicine operates, will have recourse to another. A fevered nation, like a feverish patient, turns from side to side—not through love of change, but because, while the disease continues, any fixed posture must be painful. The physician who superintends his condition knows that his restlessness and impatience are symptoms of the disease: it would be well if those who superintend our political and ecclesiastical state, while they justly regard discontents and disturbances as evils in themselves, would also look upon them as certain signs that there is something wrong somewhere.’ (Pages 315-318.)

‘Embrace and invite helps and advices touching the execution of thy office.’

‘The dread of unworthy imputations of undue influence may often drive a worthy man into a perilous course. The fear of being deemed an imitator is scarcely less dangerous than that of being supposed to be led. We frequently see those who regard the course of a wise and good man with mingled affection and veneration, influenced by his example for the worse rather than for the better, by indulging their ruling passion for originality, and by their abhorrence of being regarded as followers and imitators. To avoid coincidences becomes the great labour of their lives, and they take every opportunity of ostentatiously declaring the originality and independence of their course. Nay, they will not only declare their originality, but they will seek to make or find opportunities of exhibiting it, though the course they adopt in consequence may be contrary to their own secret judgment. A man who yields to this weakness, which is far more rife than the world generally believes, is the slave of any one who chuses to work upon his foible. The only thing requisite to make him commit any conceivable folly, is to dare him to depart from his friend’s counsel or example. Miss

Edgeworth, in her *Juvenile Tales*, has admirably illustrated the consequence of yielding to such fears; Tarlton in vain strove to persuade the weak Lovett to break bounds, by appeals to his courage, but when he hinted that his refusal would be attributed to his dependence on the strong-minded Hardy, the poor boy sprang over the wall with nervous alacrity. This dread of imitation often leads to the neglect of valuable suggestions which might be derived from the tactics and example of adversaries. 'Fas est et ab hoste doceri,' is a maxim more frequently quoted than acted on, and yet its wisdom is confirmed by every day's experience. A casual remark made long ago to me by your Lordship contains the *rationale* of the whole matter—'It is ignorance, and not knowledge, that rejects instruction; it is weakness, and not strength, that refuses co-operation.' (Page 77.)

'In bestowing office, and in selecting instruments, a man anxious to do his duty must take into account both the kind and degree of fitness in the candidates. Of the *degrees* of intelligence the world is a very incompetent judge; and of the differences in *kind*, it knows little or nothing. With the vulgar everything is good, bad, or middling; and if three persons are worthy and intelligent men, you will find that the preference you show to any one of them is considered to be the result of mere caprice. For instance, you know that the clerical requisites for an agricultural parish are different from those necessary in a manufacturing district, and that both are dissimilar to the qualifications for a chaplaincy to a collegiate institution, or for a prebendal stall. Your choice will be guided by these considerations; but, beyond doubt, you will find very few who can appreciate or even understand such motives. . . . Now, this want of discriminating power and knowledge in the spectators of your career, will by no means induce them to suspend the exercise of their fallacious judgment; on the contrary, opinions will be pronounced most positively by those who are most wanting in opportunity to discover, and in capacity to estimate, your motives. But the erroneous judgments of others must not lead you to be suspicious of your own; the value of the tree will be finally known by its fruits,—it would be folly to neglect its training, or to grub it up, because people ignorant of the adaptations of soil to growth, tell you that another tree

in the same place would be more useful or more ornamental. You know both the soil and the plant—the vast majority of your censurers will know nothing of the one, and very little of the other.’ (Page 174.)

‘When thou changest thine opinion or course, profess it plainly, and declare it, together with the reasons that moved thee to change.’

Considering that the course Bacon here recommends is not only the most ingenuous and dignified, but also the most prudent with a view to men’s approbation, it is wonderful how often this maxim is violated. Many persons will rather *back out* of an opinion or course of conduct, by the most awkward shifts, than frankly acknowledge a change of mind. They seem to dread nothing so much as a suspicion of what they call ‘inconsistency;’ that is, owning oneself to be wiser to-day than yesterday.

It has been pointed out in the *Elements of Rhetoric*,¹ that there is no *inconsistency* (though the term is often improperly so applied) in a change of opinion, provided it be frankly avowed; since this is what any sensible man, conscious of being fallible, holds himself always ready for, if good reasons can be shown. Indeed, any one who, while *not* claiming infallibility, yet resolves *never to alter* his opinion, is, in that, manifestly inconsistent. For, real inconsistency is the holding—either expressly or impliedly—two opposite opinions at *the same time*; as, for instance, proclaiming the natural right of all men to freedom, and yet maintaining a system of slavery; or condemning disingenuous conduct in one party, which, in the opposite party, you vindicate; or confessing yourself fallible, and yet resolving to be immutable.

It is remarkable that a change of opinions is sometimes falsely imputed to a man in high office, or otherwise influential, as a device of party-craft, or to cover a change in the way of treating him. When some Party has been vainly trying to hunt down (as the phrase is) by calumny and vexatious opposition, one who refuses to join them, and they find that their assaults instead of prevail-

¹ Part ii. chap. iii. sec. 5.

ing, rather recoil on themselves, or perhaps that he may be a useful help to them in some object, the most crafty of them will sometimes give out that *he* has changed, and is converted,—or in a fair way to be converted—to their party:—that he has ‘modified his views,’ and is becoming (suppose) ‘Conservative,’ or ‘Liberal,’ or ‘Orthodox,’ or ‘Evangelical,’ &c., as the case may be. Thus they escape the shame (as the vulgar account it) of frankly owning that they were wrong in their former persecution. And, moreover, they perhaps hope actually to win him to their party; or at least, to persuade the multitude that they have done so; and thus enlist at least the influence of his name in their cause.

And here it is worth observing that any one who has been brought up in a certain system, true or false (whether of religion, politics, or philosophy), and has never heard, or never listened to, anything against it, will be not unlikely, when he does come to hear objections, to change his views. Any one, again, who has attentively examined the arguments on opposite sides, and has thereupon made up his mind, will be much less likely to change. Yet many instances do occur of such change taking place. But if this does take place,—if a man abandons the opinion he had *deliberately* embraced and long held,—then there is little fear, or hope, of his changing for the worse, or for the better. You have a fair chance of converting one who has never yet heard both sides: you have much less, with one who *has* heard both sides, and embraced the wrong: but still, you have *some* chance even with him. But with one who has deliberately embraced the right, and then abandoned it, your labour will generally be quite lost.

‘A servant or a favourite, if he be inward, and no other apparent cause of esteem, is commonly thought but a by-way to close corruption.’

‘If the relations you form with your subordinates, particularly those whose position brings them into frequent and immediate contact with you, be founded on intellectual sympathies, and common views of great principles, efforts will be made to sow discord between you, by representing him as the juggler, and you as the puppet. In this case calumny disguises its

imputation by flattery, and compliments your heart at the expense of your head. 'He is,' the maligners will say, 'a very worthy, well-meaning man, but he sees only with A. B.'s eyes, and acts only on A. B.'s suggestions; he is a very good and clever man, but he thinks by proxy.'

'If you are a student,—if you have acquired any reputation for scholarship or literature,—but, above all, if you have ever been an author, this imputation will be circulated and credited; for, one of the most bitter pieces of revenge which readers take on writers, is to receive implicitly the aphorism of the block-heads, that studious habits produce an inaptitude for the business of active life.

'The imputation of being led is not very pleasant, but it may very safely be despised; in the long run men will learn to judge of your actions from their nature, and not from their supposed origin. But the nature of this calumny deserves to be more closely investigated, because there is nothing more injurious to public men than the jealousy of subordinate strength which it is designed to produce. The cases are, indeed, very rare, of an upright, sensible man being led either by a knave or a fool; but there are countless examples of a weak man being led by a weaker, or a low-principled man by a downright rogue. Now, in most of these cases, it will be found that the subjugation arose from trusting to the impossibility of being led by one of obviously inferior strength. Cunning is the wisdom of weakness, and those who chuse the weak for their instruments, expose themselves to its arts.' (Pages 68-70.)

And here it is to be observed that it is (as Dr. Taylor hints in the passage above) a common artifice of those who wish to disparage some person of too high character to be assailed openly, to profess great esteem and veneration for him, but to lament his being 'in bad hands;'—*mised* by evil counsellors, who make him think and do whatever they will. This is just the manifesto put forth by most rebels; who honour, forsooth, their king, but rise in arms to drive away his bad advisers. Now, though a *little boy* may be on the whole a promising child, —notwithstanding that he may have been seduced or bullied into something wrong, by naughty seniors, a *man*, and one in high station, if he really does allow himself to be led blindfold by weak or wicked men, is evidently *good-for-nothing*. And such

therefore must be the opinion really entertained of a person to whom this is imputed, how much soever of esteem and veneration may be professed.

‘As for facility, it is worse than bribery.’

‘It is scarcely necessary to dwell on the necessity of caution in bestowing confidence ; it is the highest favour in your power to confer, and deliberation enhances an act of kindness just as much as it aggravates an act of malice. ‘Favours which seem to be dispensed upon an impulse, with an unthinking facility, are received like the liberalities of a spendthrift, and men thank God for them.’ It is of more importance to observe that even a greater degree of caution is necessary in suspending or withdrawing confidence ; gross indeed should be the treachery, and unquestionable the proofs, that would justify such a course. The world generally will blame your original choice ; your discarded adherent will be lowered in his own esteem, and consequently will thus far have made a sad progress in moral degradation ; and your own mind will not escape scatheless ; for greater proneness to suspicion will of necessity develope itself in your character. Most of all is caution required in restoring confidence ; constitutional changes are wrought in every moral principle during its period of suspended animation ; though the falling-out of lovers be proverbially the renewal of love, it is questionable whether the suspended confidence of friends is ever wholly effaced in its influences. Had Cæsar recovered from the stab which Brutus gave him, he might, with his usual clemency, have pardoned the crime ; but he would not have been the Cæsar I take him for, if he did not ever after adopt the precaution of wearing armour when he was in company with Brutus. The hatred of an enemy is bad enough, but no earthly passion equals in its intensity the hatred of a friend.’ (Page 72.)

‘There are people who believe that the voice of censure should never be heard in an interview, and that you have no right to rebuke presumption, check interference, or make men conscious of their weakness. You are to affect a humility, by which you tacitly confess yourself destitute of moral judgment. But you must remember that, in interviews connected with your

official station, you appear for the most part as an adjudicator ; an appeal is made to you, as holding the balance of justice, and also as wielder of its sword. 'A righteous humility,' says the author of the *Statesman*, 'will teach a man never to pass a sentence in a spirit of exultation : a righteous courage will teach him never to withhold it from fear of being disliked. Popularity is commonly obtained by a dereliction of the duties of censure, under a pretext of humility.' (Page 256.)

'There is great danger of praise from men in high place being identified with promise ; and compliment tortured into grounds of hope,—not always hope of promotion, but hope of influencing promotion. Your approbation warmly expressed will be deemed to have a value beyond the mere expression of your opinion ; and though you expressly guard against raising expectations, you will nevertheless raise them. A late Chancellor, to whom more books were sent and dedicated than he could possibly have read if his life had been prolonged to antediluvian duration, by the complimentary answers he sent to the authors, gathered round him a host of expectants, and produced a mass of suffering which would scarcely be credited save by those who were personally acquainted with it. Kindness and cordiality of manner are scarcely less pleasing to the feelings than express compliment, and they are the more safe for both parties, since they afford no foundation for building up expectations ; a species of architecture sufficiently notorious for the weakness of the foundations that support an enormous superstructure.' (Page 163.)

'Severity breedeth fear.'

'It may be doubted whether it is politic, where a man has wholly lost your esteem, and has no chance of regaining it, to let him know that his doom is fixed irrevocably. The hope of recovering his place in your estimation may be a serviceable check on his conduct ; and if he supposes you to be merely *angry* with him (a mistake commonly made by vulgar minds), he may hope and try to pacify you by an altered course, trusting that in time you will forget all. In such a case you need not do or say anything deceitful ; you have only to leave him in his error. On the other hand, if he finds that you have no resentment, but that your feeling is confirmed disesteem, and that the

absence of all anger is the very consequence of such a feeling—for you cannot be angry where you do not mean to trust again—he may turn out a mischievous later.

‘On the whole, however, the frank, open-hearted course is the more politic in the long run. If you use towards all whom you really esteem, a language which in time will come to be fully understood by all, from its being never used except where you really esteem, then, and then only, you will deserve and obtain the full reliance of the worthy. They will feel certain that they possess your esteem, and that if they do anything by which it may be forfeited, it will be lost for ever. To establish such a belief is the best means of preserving the peace and purity of your circle; and it is worth while risking some enmity to effect so desirable an object.

‘It must, however, be observed that it is equally politic and christian-like to avoid breaking with anybody. While you purchase no man’s forbearance by false hopes of his regaining your esteem, you must not drive him into hostility through fear of your doing him a mischief. The rule of Spartan warfare is not inapplicable to the conduct of a christian statesman; never give way to an assailing enemy,—never pursue a flying foe further than is necessary to secure the victory. Let it be always understood that it is safe to yield to you, and you will remove the worst element of resistance, despair of pardon.’ (Pages 72-76.)

‘Be not too remembering of thy place in conversation and private answers to suitors.’

There may, however, be an error on the opposite side.—‘Men are often called affable and no way proud,’ (says Dr. Cooke Taylor in the work already quoted,) ‘who really exhibit a vulgar sort of pride in taking liberties, and talking to their inferiors with a kind of condescending familiarity which is gratifying to mean minds, but which to every person of delicacy, is the most odious form of insolence. If you wish to be familiar with an inferior, let him rather feel that you have raised him to your own level than that you have lowered yourself to his. You may see the propriety of this aphorism unfortunately manifested in books written by clever men for the use of the humble

classes, and for children. Many of these are rejected as offensive, because the writers deem it necessary to show that they are going down to a low level of understanding ; their familiarity becomes sheer vulgarity, and their affected simplicity is puzzle-headed obscurity. The condescension of some great people is like the 'letting down' in such authors ; they render themselves more ridiculous than Hercules at the court of Omphale ; for they assume the distaff without discarding the club and lion's skin. It is also very unfair ; for those who go to admire the spinning, or to be amused at its incongruity, are exposed to the danger of getting an awkward knock from the club.' (Page 180.)

'Certainly, men in great fortunes are strangers to themselves ; and while they are in the puzzle of business they have no time to tend their health either of body or mind.'

The following passage from *The Bishop* bears upon this engrossment in public business :—'There are two opposite errors into which many public men have fallen ; on the one hand, allowing family concerns to intermingle with public business, on the other, sacrificing to their station all the enjoyments of private life. The former interference is rare ; it is so obviously a source of perplexity and annoyance, that it soon works its own cure ; but the latter 'grows by what it feeds upon.' Unless you habitually court the privacy of the domestic circle, you will find that you are losing that intimate acquaintance with those who compose it which is its chief charm, and the source of all its advantage. In your family alone can there be that intercourse of heart with heart which falls like refreshing dew on the soul when it is withered and parched by the heats of business, and the intense selfishness which you must hourly meet in public life. Unless your affections are sheltered in that sanctuary, they cannot long resist the blighting influence of a constant repression of their development, and a compulsory substitution of calculation in their stead. Domestic privacy is necessary, not only to your happiness, but even to your efficiency ; it gives the rest necessary to your active powers of judgment and discrimination ; it keeps unclosed those well-springs of the heart whose flow is necessary to float onwards the determination of the head.

It is not enough that the indulgence of these affections should fill up the casual chinks of your time; they must have their allotted portion of it, with which nothing but urgent necessity should be allowed to interfere. These things are the aliments of his greatness; they preserve within him that image of moral beauty which constant intercourse with the public world—that is, the world with its worst side outwards—is too likely to efface. ‘If our clergy had been permitted to marry,’ said an intelligent Romanist, ‘we never should have had inquisitors.’ (Page 327.)

*‘A place showeth the man: and it showeth some to the better,
and some to the worse.’*

Bacon here quotes a Greek proverb, and a very just one. Some persons of great promise, when raised to high office, either are puffed up with self-sufficiency, or daunted by the ‘high winds that blow on high hills,’ or in some way or other disappoint expectation. And others, again, show talents and courage, and other qualifications, when these are called forth by high office, beyond what any one gave them credit for before, and beyond what they suspected to be in themselves. It is unhappily very difficult to judge how a man will conduct himself in a high office, till the trial has been made.

It must not, however, be forgotten that censure and commendation will, as in other cases, be indiscriminate. By those whose nearness, or easiness of access, enables them to form an accurate judgment, many a public man will be found neither so detestable nor so admirable as perhaps he is thought by opposite parties. This truth is well expressed in the fable of ‘The Clouds.’¹

‘Two children once, at eventide,
Thus prattled by their parents’ side:—
‘See, mother, see that stormy cloud!
What can its inky bosom shroud?
It looks so black, I do declare
I shudder quite to see it there.’

¹ See Fourth Book of the *Lessons for the Use of National Schools*, p. 49.

'And father, father, now behold
Those others, all of pink and gold !
How beautiful and bright their hue !
I wish that I were up there too :
For, if they look so fine from here,
What must they be when one is near !'
'Children,' the smiling sire replied,
'I've climbed a mountain's lofty side,
Where, lifted 'mid the clouds awhile,
Distance no longer could beguile :
And closer seen, I needs must say
That all the clouds are merely grey ;
Differing in *shade* from one another,
But each in *colour* like his brother.
Those clouds you see of gold and pink,
To others look as black as ink ;
And that same cloud, so black to you,
To some may wear a golden hue.
E'en so, my children, they whom fate
Has planted in a low estate,
Viewing their rulers from afar,
Admire what prodigies they are.
O ! what a tyrant ! dreadful doom !
His crimes have wrapped our land in gloom !
A tyrant ! nay, a hero this,
The glorious source of all our bliss !
But they who haunt the magic sphere,
Beholding then its inmates near,
Know that the men, by some adored,
By others flouted and abhorred,
Nor sink so low, nor rise so high,
As seems it to the vulgar eye.
The man his party deems a hero,
His foes, a Judas, or a Nero—
Patriot of superhuman worth,
Or vilest wretch that cumber's earth,
Derives his bright or murky hues
From distant and from party views ;
Seen close, nor black nor gold are they,
But every one a *sober grey*.' "

In a smaller number, but still, a considerable number, one may find the opposite error to the one just noticed. For, in almost all subjects, each kind of fault may be matched with a contrary one, in those who 'mistake reverse of wrong for right.' And as the great mass of mankind are prone to that kind of *exaggeration* I have alluded to, so there are some whom one may call *levellers*; persons whom the late Mr. Canning in some satirical verses ironically calls the '*candid*;' men who maintain that (as he expresses it) 'Black's not so black, nor white so *very* white.'

They are in such dread of indiscriminate and exaggerated views, that they *extenuate* everything, good or bad, always looking out for some ground of disparagement of whatever is excellent, and for something to excuse, or commend, or admire, in whatever is odious or contemptible; and bringing each person or thing to a kind of Procrustean bed, on which they stretch the short, and curtail the long. Having observed that the vulgar are prone to divide all men into Angels and Fiends—to see no fault in those they esteem, and no good in those they disapprove, these persons cultivate a habit of viewing *all small* faults, or small merits, through a magnifying glass, and to view all that are great through a reversed telescope. They magnify whatever is little, and extenuate all that is great.

This is one of what I have ventured to designate as 'Secondary vulgar errors.'

ESSAY XII. OF BOLDNESS.

IT is a trivial grammar-school text, but yet worthy a wise man's consideration :—question was asked of Demosthenes,¹ what was the chief part of an orator? He answered, action : what next? action : what next again? action. He said it that knew it best, and had by nature himself no advantage in that he commended. A strange thing, that that part of an orator which is but superficial, and rather the virtue of a player, should be placed so high above those other noble parts, of invention, elocution, and the rest; nay, almost alone, as if it were all in all. But the reason is plain. There is in human nature generally more of the fool than of the wise; and therefore those faculties by which the foolish part of men's minds is taken, are most potent. Wonderful like is the case of boldness in civil business; what first? boldness: what second and third? boldness. And yet boldness is a child of ignorance and baseness, far inferior to other parts: but, nevertheless, it doth fascinate, and bind hand and foot those that are either shallow in judgment or weak in courage, which are the greatest part; yea, and prevaiileth with wise men at weak times; therefore we see it hath done wonders in popular States, but with senates and princes less—and more, ever upon the first entrance of bold persons into action, than soon after; for boldness is an ill keeper of promise. Surely, as there are mountebanks for the natural body, so there are mountebanks for the politic² Body—men that undertake great cures, and perhaps have been lucky in two or three experiments, but want the grounds of science, and therefore cannot hold out. Nay, you shall see a bold fellow many times do Mahomet's miracle. Mahomet made the people believe that he would call a hill to him, and from the top of it offer up his prayers for the observers of his law. The people assembled; Mahomet called the hill to come to him again and again; and when the hill stood still, he was never a whit³ abashed, but

¹ Plut. *Vit. Demosth.* 17, 18.

² Politic. *Political; civil.*

³ Whit. *The least degree; the smallest particle.* 'Not a *whit* behind the very chiefest Apostles.'—2 *Cor.* xi. 5.

said, 'If the hill will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet will go to the hill.' So these men, when they have promised great matters, and failed most shamefully, yet, if they have the perfection of boldness, they will but slight it over,¹ and make a turn, and no more ado.²

Certainly, to men of great judgment, bold persons are sport to behold—nay, and to the vulgar also boldness hath somewhat of the ridiculous : for, if absurdity be the subject of laughter, doubt you not but great boldness is seldom without some absurdity. Especially it is a sport to see when a bold fellow is out of countenance ; for that puts his face into a most shrunken and wooden posture, as needs it must—for in bashfulness the spirits do a little go and come—but with bold men, upon like occasion, they stand at a stay;³ like a stale at chess, where it is no mate, but yet the game cannot stir. But this last were fitter for a satire than for a serious observation.

This is well to be weighed, that boldness is ever blind, for it seeth not dangers and inconveniences : therefore it is ill in counsel, good in execution ; so that the right use of bold persons is, that they never command in chief, but be seconds, and under the direction of others ; for in counsel it is good to see dangers, and in execution not to see them, except they be very great.

ANNOTATION.

'Boldness is a child of ignorance and baseness, far inferior to other parts.'

Bacon seems to have had that over-estimate of those who are called the 'prudent' which is rather common. One cause of the supposed superiority of wisdom often attributed to the over-cautious, reserved, non-confiding, non-enterprising charac-

¹ Slight over. *To treat carelessly.*

*'His death, and your deliverance,
Were themes that ought not to be slighted over.'*—Dryden.

² Ado. *'Much Ado about Nothing.'*—Shakespeare.

³ Stay. *Stand ; cessation of progression.*

*'Never to decay
Until his revolution was at stay.'*—Milton.

ters, as compared with the more open, free-spoken, active, and daring, is the tendency to overrate the amount of what is distinctly known. The bold and enterprising are likely to meet with a greater number of *tangible failures* than the over-cautious: and yet if you take a hundred average men of each description, you will find that the bold have had, on the whole, a more successful career. But the failures—that is, the non-success—of the over-cautious, cannot be so distinctly traced. Such a man only misses the advantages—often very great—which boldness and free-speaking might have gained. He who always goes on foot will never meet with a fall from a horse, or be stopped on a journey by a restive horse; but he who rides, though exposed to these accidents, will, in the end, have accomplished more journeys than the other. He who lets his land lie fallow, will have incurred no losses from bad harvests; but he will not have made so much of his land as if he had ventured to encounter such risks.

The kind of boldness which is most to be deprecated—or at least as much so as the boldness of ignorance—is daring, unaccompanied by firmness and steadiness of endurance. Such was that which Tacitus attributes to the Gauls and Britons; ‘Eadem in deprecendis periculis audacia; eadem in detrectandis, ubi advenerint, formido.’¹ This character seems to belong to those who have—in phrenological language—*Hope*, and *Combativeness*, large, and *Firmness* small.

¹ ‘The same daring in rushing into dangers, and the same timidity in shrinking from them when they come.’

ESSAY XIII. OF GOODNESS, AND GOODNESS OF NATURE.

I TAKE goodness in this sense,—the affecting¹ of the weal of men, which is that the Grecians call Philanthropia; and the word humanity, as it is used, is a little too light to express it. Goodness, I call the habit, and goodness of nature the inclination. This, of all virtues and dignities of the mind, is the greatest, being the character of the Deity; and without it, Man is a busy, mischievous, wretched thing, no better than a kind of vermin. Goodness answers to the theological virtue, Charity, and admits no excess but error. The desire of power, in excess, caused the angels to fall—the desire of knowledge, in excess, caused Man to fall; but in charity there is no excess, neither can angel or Man come in danger by it. The inclination to goodness is imprinted deeply in the nature of Man; insomuch, that if it issue not towards men, it will take unto other living creatures; as it is seen in the Turks, a cruel people, who, nevertheless, are kind to beasts, give alms to dogs and birds; insomuch as Busbechius² reporteth, a christian boy in Constantinople had like to have been stoned for gagging, in a waggishness, a long-billed fowl.

Errors, indeed, in this virtue, in goodness or charity, may be committed. The Italians have of it an ungracious proverb, 'Tanto buon che val niente':³ and one of the doctors of Italy, Nicholas Machiavel, had the confidence to put in writing, almost in plain terms, 'That the christian faith had given up good men in prey to those who are tyrannical and unjust:' which he spake, because, indeed, there was never law, or sect, or opinion, did so much magnify goodness as the christian religion doth; therefore, to avoid the scandal, and the danger both, it is good to take knowledge⁴ of the errors of a habit so excellent. Seek the good of other men, but be not in

¹ Affecting. *The being desirous of; aiming at.* See page 1.

² Busbechius. A learned Fleming of the 16th century, in his *Travels in the East*.

³ 'So good that he is good for nothing.'

⁴ Take knowledge of. *Take cognizance of.* 'They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.'—*Acts* iv. 13.

bondage to their faces or fancies ; for that is but facility or softness, which taketh an honest mind prisoner. Neither give thou Æsop's cock a gem, who would be better pleased and happier if he had a barley-corn. The example of God teacheth the lesson truly : ' He sendeth his rain, and maketh his sun to shine upon the just and the unjust ;' but he doth not rain wealth nor shine honour and virtues upon men equally : common benefits are to be communicated with all, but peculiar benefits with choice. And beware how in making the portraiture thou breakest the pattern ; for divinity maketh the love of ourselves the pattern—the love of our neighbours but the portraiture : ' Sell all thou hast, and give it to the poor, and follow me ;' but sell not all thou hast, except thou come and follow me—that is, except thou have a vocation¹ wherein thou mayest do as much good with little means as with great—for otherwise, in feeding the streams thou driest the fountain.

Neither is there only a habit of goodness directed by right reason ; but there is in some men, even in nature, a disposition towards it, as, on the other side, there is a natural malignity ; for there be that in their nature do not affect the good of others. The lighter sort of malignity turneth but to a crossness, or frowardness, or aptness to oppose, or difficileness,² or the like ; but the deeper sort to envy, and mere mischief. Such men, in other men's calamities, are, as it were, in season, and are ever on the loading³ part—not so good as the dogs that licked Lazarus' sores, but like flies that are still buzzing upon anything that is raw—misanthropi [men-haters], that make it their practice to bring men to the bough, and yet never have a tree for the purpose in their gardens, as Timon⁴ had : such dispositions are the very errors of human nature, and yet they are the fittest timber to make great politics⁵ of—like to knee-timber,⁶ that is good for ships that are ordained to be tossed, but not for building houses that shall stand firm.

¹ Vocation. See page 23.

² Difficileness. *Difficulty to be persuaded.* 'The Cardinal, finding the Pope *difficile* in granting the dispensation.'—Bacon, *Henry VII.*

³ Loading. *Loaden ; burdened.*

⁴ See an account of Timon in Plutarch's *Life of Marc Antony.*

⁵ Politics. *Politicians.* See page 24.

⁶ Knee-timber. *A timber in the shape of the knee when bent.*

The parts and signs of goodness are many. If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world, and that his heart is no island cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins to them,—if he be compassionate towards the affliction of others, it shows that his heart is like the noble tree that is wounded itself when it gives the balm,—if he easily pardons and remits offences, it shows that his mind is planted above injuries, so that he cannot be shot,—if he be thankful for small benefits, it shows that he weighs men's minds, and not their trash; but, above all, if he have St. Paul's perfection, that he would wish to be an anathema from Christ,¹ for the salvation of his brethren, it shows much of a divine nature, and a kind of conformity with Christ Himself.

ANNOTATIONS.

' Goodness admits no excess, but error.'

In the present day, we employ the term '*good-nature*' in reference to the *smaller* manifestations of kindness, on ordinary occasions. To speak of any one who devoted himself, like Howard, or Wilberforce, to the promotion of some great benefit to Mankind, as a *good-natured* man, would sound ridiculous. We should call him a philanthropist.

Bacon, however, is speaking, universally, of what is now called benevolence and beneficence; and his remark is very just, that it admits of no excess in quantity, though it may be misdirected and erroneous. For if your liberality be such as to reduce your family to poverty, or—like the killing of the hen that laid the golden eggs—such as to put it out of your power hereafter to be liberal at all; or if it be bestowed on the undeserving; this is rather to be accounted an unwise and misdirected benevolence than an excess of it in quantity. And we have here a remarkable instance of the necessity of keeping the whole character and

¹ *Romans ix. 3.*

conduct, even our most amiable propensities, under the control of right principle guided by reason ; and of taking pains to understand the subject relating to each duty you are called on to perform. For there is perhaps no one quality that can produce a greater amount of mischief than may be done by thoughtless good-nature. For instance, if any one, out of tenderness of heart, and reluctance to punish or to discard the criminal and worthless, lets loose on society, or advances to important offices, mischievous characters, he will have conferred a doubtful benefit on a few, and done incalculable hurt to thousands. So, also, to take one of the commonest and most obvious cases, that of charity to the poor,—a man of great wealth, by freely relieving all idle vagabonds, might go far towards ruining the industry, and the morality, and the prosperity, of a whole nation. ‘ For there can be no doubt that careless, indiscriminate alms-giving does far more harm than good ; since it encourages idleness and improvidence, and also imposture. If you give freely to ragged and filthy street-beggars, you are in fact *hiring* people to dress themselves in filthy rags, and go about begging with fictitious tales of distress. If, on the contrary, you carefully inquire for, and relieve, honest and industrious persons who have fallen into distress through unavoidable misfortune, you are not only doing good to those objects, but also holding out an encouragement, generally, to honest industry.

‘ You may, however, meet with persons who say, ‘ As long as it is my intention to relieve real distress, my charity is equally virtuous, though the tale told me may be a false one. The impostor alone is to be blamed who told it me ; I acted on what he said ; and if that is untrue, the fault is his, and not mine.’

‘ Now this is a fair plea, if any one is deceived after making careful inquiry : but if he has not taken the trouble to do this, regarding it as no concern of his, you might ask him how he would act and judge in a case where he is thoroughly in earnest—that is, where his own important interests are concerned. Suppose he employed a steward or other agent, to buy for him a house, or a horse, or any other article, and this agent paid an exorbitant price for what was really worth little or nothing, giving just the same kind of excuse for allowing his employer to be thus

cheated ; saying, 'I made no careful inquiries, but *took the seller's word* ; and his being a liar and a cheat, is his fault, and not mine ;' the employer would doubtless reply, 'The seller indeed is to be condemned for cheating ; but so are you, for your carelessness of my interests. His being greatly in fault does not clear *you* ; and your merely intending to do what was right, is no excuse for your not taking pains to gain right information.'

'Now on such a principle we ought to act in our charities : regarding ourselves as stewards of all that Providence has bestowed, and as bound to expend it in the best way possible, and not shelter our own faulty negligence under the misconduct of another.'¹

It is now generally acknowledged that relief afforded to want, as mere want, tends to increase that want ; while the relief afforded to the sick, the infirm, and the disabled, has plainly no tendency to multiply its own objects. Now it is remarkable, that the Lord Jesus employed his miraculous power in healing the sick, *continually*, but in feeding the hungry, only twice ; while the power of multiplying food which He then manifested, together with his directing the disciples to take care and gather up the fragments that remained that nothing might be lost, served to mark that the abstaining from any like procedure on other occasions was deliberate design. In this, our Lord had probably in view (besides other objects), to afford us some instruction, from his example, as to the mode of our charity. Certain it is, that the reasons for this distinction are now, and ever must be, the same as at that time.

Now to those engaged in that important and inexhaustible subject of inquiry, the internal evidences of Christianity, it will be interesting to observe here, one of the instances in which the super-human wisdom of Jesus forestalled the discovery of an important principle, often overlooked not only by the generality of men, but by the most experienced statesmen and the ablest philosophers, even in these later ages of extended human knowledge, and development of mental power.

¹ See *Introductory Lessons on Morals*, lesson xvi. p. 139.

‘It is good to take knowledge of the errors of a habit so excellent.’

As there are errors in its direction, so there are mistakes concerning its nature. For instance, some persons have a certain nervous horror at the sight of bodily pain, or death, or blood, which they and others mistake for benevolence; which may or may not accompany it. Phrenologists have been derided for attributing large *destructiveness* (which, however, is not inconsistent with large benevolence, though more prominently remarkable when not so combined) to a person who had never *killed* anything but a flea, or to one who could not bear to crush a wasp or fly that was keeping him awake all night; as if they had meant ‘the organ of killing.’ And yet such a person would, according to their own accounts of their own system, bear out their sentence, if he was harsh in admonishing or rebuking, bitter in resentment, trampling without pity on the feelings and the claims of others, &c.

We should not confound physical delicacy of nerves, with extreme tenderness of heart, and benevolence, and gentleness of character. It is also important to guard against mistaking for *good-nature*, what is properly *good-humour*—a cheerful flow of spirits, and easy temper not readily annoyed; which is compatible with great selfishness.

It is curious to observe how people who are always thinking of their own pleasure or interest, will often, if possessing considerable ability, make others give way to them, and obtain everything they seek, *except happiness*. For, like a spoiled child, who at length cries for the moon, they are always dissatisfied. And the benevolent, who are always thinking of others, and sacrificing their own personal gratifications, are usually the happiest of mankind. There is this great advantage also that the benevolent have over the selfish, as they grow *old*: the latter, seeking only their own advantage, cannot escape the painful feeling that any benefit they procure for themselves can last but a short time; but one who has been always seeking the good of others, has his interest kept up to the last, because he of course wishes that good may befall them after he is gone.

'The Turks, a cruel people, are nevertheless kind to beasts.'

In the article formerly mentioned, in the *North British Review* (Aug. 1857), occurs a curious confirmation of Bacon's remark. And I will accordingly take the liberty of extracting the passage.

'The European cares nothing for brute life. He destroys the lower animals without scruple, whenever it suits his convenience, his pleasure, or his caprice. He shoots his favourite horse and his favourite dog, as soon as they become too old for service. The Mussulman preserves the lives of the lower animals solicitously. Though he considers the dog impure, and never makes a friend of him, he thinks it sinful to kill him, and allows the neighbourhood and even the streets of his towns to be infested by packs of masterless brutes, which you would get rid of in London in one day. The beggar does not venture to destroy his vermin: he puts them tenderly on the ground, to be swept up into the clothes of the next passer-by. There are hospitals in Cairo for superannuated cats, where they are fed at the public expense.

'But to *human* life he is utterly indifferent. He extinguishes it with much less scruple than that with which you shoot a horse past his work. Abbas, the late Viceroy, when a boy, had his pastry-cook bastinadoed to death. Mehemet Ali mildly reproved him for it, as you would correct a child for killing a butterfly. He explained to his little grandson that such things ought not to be done without a motive.'

Bacon slightly hints at a truth most important to be kept in mind, that a considerable endowment of natural benevolence is not incompatible with cruelty; and that, consequently, we must neither infer absence of all benevolence from such conduct as would be called ferocious, or 'ill-natured,' nor again calculate, from the existence of a certain amount of good-nature, on a man's never doing anything cruel.

When Thurtell, the murderer, was executed, there was a shout of derision raised against the phrenologists for saying that his organ of *benevolence* was large. But they replied, that there was also large *destructiveness*, and a moral deficiency, which would account for a man goaded to rage (by having been

cheated of almost all he had, by the man he killed) committing that act. It is a remarkable confirmation of their view, that a gentleman who visited the prison where Thurtell was confined (shortly after the execution) found the jailors, &c., full of pity and affection for him. They said he was a kind, good-hearted fellow, so obliging and friendly, that they had never had a prisoner whom they so much regretted. And such seems to have been his general character, when not influenced at once by the desire of revenge and of gain.

Again, there shall be, perhaps, a man of considerable benevolence, but so fond of a joke that he will not be restrained by any tenderness for the feelings of others—

‘Dum modo risum
Excutiat sibi, non hic cuiquam parcat amico.’¹

And he may be, perhaps, also so sensitive himself as to be enraged at any censure or ridicule directed against himself; and also so envious as to be very spiteful against those whom he finds in any way advanced beyond him. Yet this same man may, perhaps, be very kind to his friends and his poor neighbours, as long as they are not rivals, and do not at all affront him, nor afford any food for his insatiable love of ridicule.

A benevolent *disposition* is, no doubt, a great *help* towards a course of uniform practical benevolence; but let no one trust to it, when there are other strong propensities, and no firm good principle.

¹ ‘So he can but have his joke, he will spare no friend.’

ESSAY XIV. OF NOBILITY.

WE will speak of nobility first as a portion of an estate,¹ then as a condition of particular persons. A monarchy where there is no nobility at all, is ever a pure and absolute tyranny, as that of the Turks; for nobility attempts sovereignty, and draws the eyes of the people somewhat aside from the line royal: but for democracies, they need it not, and they are commonly more quiet, and less subject to sedition than where there are stirps² of nobles—for men's eyes are upon the business, and not upon the persons; or, if upon the persons, it is for the business' sake, as fittest, and not for flags and pedigree. We see the Switzers last well, notwithstanding their diversity of religion and of Cantons; for utility is their bond, and not respects.³ The United Provinces of the Low Countries in their government excel; for where there is an equality, the consultations are more indifferent,⁴ and the payments and tributes more cheerful. A great and potent nobility addeth majesty to a monarch, but diminisheth power; and putteth life and spirit into the people, but presseth their fortune. It is well when nobles are not too great for sovereignty, nor for justice; and yet maintained in that height, as the insolency⁵ of inferiors may be broken upon them before it come on too fast upon the majesty of kings. A numerous nobility causeth poverty and inconvenience in a State; for it is a surcharge of expense; and besides, it being of necessity that many of the nobility fall in time to be weak in fortune, it maketh a kind of disproportion between honour and means.

As for nobility in particular persons, it is a reverend thing to see an ancient castle or building not in decay, or to see a fair timber tree sound and perfect; how much more to behold an ancient noble family, which hath stood against the waves

¹ Estate. *State; a political body; a commonwealth.*

'The estate is green and yet ungoverned.'—*Shakespeare.*

² Stirps. *Race; family.* 'Sundry nations got footing on that land, of the which there yet remain divers great families and stirps.'—*Spenser.*

³ Respects. *Personal considerations.* See page 118.

⁴ Indifferent. *Impartial.* See page 83.

⁵ Insolency. *Insolence.* 'The insolencies of traitors, and the violences of rebels.'—*Bishop Taylor.*

and weathers of time !—for new nobility is but the act of power, but ancient nobility is the act of time.

Those that are first raised to nobility, are commonly more virtuous, but less innocent, than their descendants—for there is rarely any rising but by a commixture of good and evil arts, —but it is reason¹ the memory of their virtues remain to their posterity, and their faults die with themselves. Nobility of birth commonly abateth industry; and he that is not industrious, envieth him that is: besides, noble persons cannot go much higher; and he that standeth at a stay² when others rise, can hardly avoid motions³ of envy. On the other side, nobility extinguisheth the passive envy from others towards them, because they are in possession of honour. Certainly, kings that have able men of their nobility shall find ease in employing them, and a better slide into their business; for people naturally bend to them as born in some sort to command.

ANTITHETA ON NOBILITY.

PRO.

* * * *

‘Nobilitas laurea, qua tempus homines coronat.

‘High birth is the wreath with which men are crowned by time.’

‘Antiquitatem etiam in mortuis monumentis veneramur: quanto magis in vivis?’

‘We reverence antiquity even in lifeless monuments; how much more in living ones?’

* * * *

‘Nobilitas virtutem invidiæ subducit, gratiæ tradit.

‘Nobility withdraws virtue from envy, and commends it to favour.’

CONTRA.

‘Raro ex virtute nobilitas: rarius ex nobilitate virtus.

‘Nobility has seldom sprung from virtue: virtue still more rarely from nobility.’

‘Nobiles, majorum deprecatione, ad veniam, sepius utuntur, quam suffragatione, ad honores.

‘Persons of high birth oftener resort to their ancestors as a plea for escaping punishment than as a recommendation to high posts.’

‘Tanta solet esse industria hominum novorum, ut nobiles præ illis tanquam statui videantur.

‘Such is the activity of upstarts that men of high birth seem statues in comparison.’

‘Nobiles in stadio respectant nimis sæpe; quod mali cursoris est.

‘In running their race, men of birth look back too often; which is the mark of a bad runner.’

¹ Reason. Reasonable; right. See page 115.

² Stay. Check; cessation of progress. See page 136.

³ Motions. Internal action; feelings; impulses. ‘The motions of sin, which were by the law.’—Romans vii. 5.

ANNOTATIONS.

‘ We will speak of nobility first as a portion of an estate.’

In reference to nobility as an institution, it is important to remark how great a difference it makes whether the Order of Nobles shall include—as in Germany and most other countries—all the descendants of noble families, or, as in ours, only the eldest; the rest sinking down into commoners. The former system is very bad, dividing society into distinct castes, almost like those of the Hindus. *Our* system, through the numerous younger branches of noble families, *shades off*, as it were, the distinction between noble and not-noble, and keeps up the continuity of the whole frame.

‘ As for nobility in particular persons.’

In reference to nobility in individuals, nothing was ever better said than by Bishop Warburton—as is reported—in the House of Lords, on the occasion of some angry dispute which had arisen between a peer of noble family and one of a new creation. He said that, ‘ high birth was a thing which he never knew any one disparage, except those who had it not; and he never knew any one make a boast of it who had anything else to be proud of.’ This is worthy of a place among Bacon’s ‘*Pros* and ‘*Cons*,’ though standing half-way between the two: ‘*Nobilitatem nemo contemnit, nisi cui abest; nemo jactitat, nisi cui nihil aliud est quo gloriatur.*’

It is curious to observe, however, that a man of high family will often look down on an upstart who is exactly such a person in point of merit and achievements as the very founder of his own family;—the one from whom his nobility is derived: as if it were more creditable to be the remote *descendant* of an eminent man, than to be that very man oneself.

It is also a remarkable circumstance that *noble* birth is regarded very much according to the etymology of the word, from ‘*nosco*:’ for, a man’s descent from any one who was much *known*, is much more thought of than the moral worth of his

ancestors. And it is curious that a person of so exceptionable a character that no one would like to have had him for a *father*, may confer a kind of dignity on his great-great-great-grandchildren. An instance has been known of persons, who were the descendants of a celebrated and prominent character in the Civil War, and who was one of the Regicides, being themselves zealous royalists, and professing to be ashamed of their ancestor. And it is likely that if he were now living, they would renounce all intercourse with him. Yet it may be doubted whether they would not feel mortified if any one should prove to them that they had been under a mistake, and that they were in reality descended from another person, a respectable but obscure individual, not at all akin to the celebrated regicide.

It was a remark by a celebrated man, himself a gentleman born, but with nothing of nobility, that the difference between a man with a long line of noble ancestors, and an upstart, is that 'the one knows for certain, what the other only conjectures as highly probable, that several of his forefathers deserved hanging.' Yet it is certain, though strange, that, generally speaking, the supposed upstart would rather have this very thing a certainty—provided there were some *great* and celebrated exploit in question—than left to conjecture. If he were to discover that he could trace up his descent distinctly to a man who had deserved hanging, for robbing—not a traveller of his purse, but a king of his empire, or a neighbouring State of a province,—he would be likely to make no secret of it, and even to be better pleased, inwardly, than if he had made out a long line of ancestors who had been very honest farmers.

The happiest lot for a man, as far as birth is concerned, is that it should be such as to give him *but little occasion ever to think much about it*; which will be the case, if it be neither too high nor too low for his existing situation. Those who have sunk much below, or risen much above, what suits their birth, are apt to be uneasy, and consequently *touchy*. The one feels ashamed of his situation; the other, of his ancestors and other relatives. A nobleman's or gentleman's son, or grandson, feels degraded by waiting at table, or behind a counter; and a member of a liberal profession is apt to be ashamed of his father's having done so; and both are apt to take offence readily,

unless they are of a truly magnanimous character. It was remarked by a celebrated person, a man of a gentleman's family, and himself a gentleman by station, 'I have often thought that if I had risen like A. B., from the very lowest of the people, by my own honourable exertions, I should have rather felt proud of so great a feat, than, like him, sore and touchy; but I suppose I must be mistaken; for I observe that the far greater part of those who are so circumstanced, have just the opposite feeling.'

Those, however, of true inward nobility of character are ashamed of nothing but base conduct, and are not ready to take offence at supposed affronts; because they keep clear of whatever *deserves* contempt, and consider what is undeserved as beneath their notice.

ESSAY XV. OF SEDITIONS AND TROUBLES.

SHEPHERDS of people had need know the calendars of tempests in State ; which are commonly greatest when things grow to equality, as natural tempests about the equinoctia ;¹ and as there are certain hollow blasts of wind and secret swellings of seas before a tempest, so are there in States :—

‘ Ille etiam cæcos instare tumultus
Sæpe monet, fraudesque et operta tumescere bella.’²

Libels and licentious discourses against the State, when they are frequent and open ; and in like sort, false news often running up and down to the disadvantage of the State, and hastily embraced, are amongst the signs of troubles. Virgil, giving the pedigree of Fame, saith, she was sister to the giants :—

‘ Illam terra parens, ira irritata deorum,
Extremam (ut perhibent) Cœo Enceladoque sororem
Progeniuit.’³

As if fames⁴ were the relics of seditions past ; but they are no less indeed the preludes of seditions to come. Howsoever, he noted it right, that seditious tumults and seditious fames differ no more but as brother and sister, masculine and feminine—especially if it come to that, that the best actions of a State, and the most plausible,⁵ and which ought to give greatest contentment, are taken in ill sense, and traduced ; for that shows the envy great, as Tacitus saith, ‘ Conflata, magna invidia, seu bene, seu male, gesta premunt.’⁶ Neither doth it follow, that because these fames are a sign of troubles, that the suppressing of them with too much severity should be a remedy

¹ Equinoctia. *Equinoxes.*

² ‘ He often warns of dark fast-coming tumults, hidden fraud, and open warfare, swelling proud.’—Virgil, *Georg.* i. 465.

³ Virg. *En.* iv. 179.

‘ Enraged against the Gods, revengeful Earth
Produced her, last of the Titanian birth.’—*Dryden.*

⁴ Fames. *Reports ; rumours.* ‘ The fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh’s house, saying, Joseph’s brethren are come.’—*Genesis* xlv. 16.

⁵ Plausible. *Laudable ; deserving of applause.* See page 104.

⁶ ‘ Great envy being excited, they condemn acts, whether good or bad.’ (Quoted probably from memory.)—Tac. *Hist.* i. 7.

of troubles;¹ for the despising of them many times checks them best, and the going about to stop them doth but make a wonder long-lived. Also that kind of obedience, which Tacitus speaketh of, is to be held suspected: 'Erant in officio, sed tamen qui mallent mandata imperantium interpretari, quam exequi';² disputing, excusing, cavilling upon mandates and directions, is a kind of shaking off the yoke, and assay³ of disobedience: especially if in those disputings they which are for the direction speak fearfully and tenderly, and those that are against it, audaciously.

Also, as Machiavel noteth well, when princes, that ought to be common⁴ parents, make themselves as a party, and lean to a side, that is, as a boat that is overthrown by uneven weight on the one side—as was well seen in the time of Henry III. of France; for, first himself entered League for the extirpation of the Protestants, and presently after the same League was turned upon himself. For when the authority of princes is made but an accessory to a cause, and that there be other bands that tie faster than the band of sovereignty, kings begin to be put almost out of possession.

Also, when discords, and quarrels, and factions, are carried openly and audaciously; it is a sign the reverence of government is lost; for the motions of the greatest persons in a government ought to be as the motions of the planets under *primum mobile*⁵ (according to the old opinion), which is, that every of them⁶ is carried swiftly by the highest motion, and softly in their own motion; and, therefore, when great ones in their own particular motion move violently, and, as Tacitus expresseth it well, 'Liberius quam ut imperantium meminissent'⁷—

¹ There is a law in our Statute Book against 'Slandorous Reports and Tales to cause Discord between King and People.'—Anno 5 Edward I., *Westminster Primer*, c. xxxi.

² 'They were in attendance on their duties, yet preferred putting their own construction on the commands of their rulers to executing them.'—Tacit. *Hist.* i. 39.

³ Assay. *The first attempt, or taste, by way of trial.*

'For well he weened that so glorious bait

Would tempt his guest to make thereof assay.'—*Spenser.*

⁴ Common. *Serving for all.* 'The Book of Common Prayer.'

⁵ *Primum mobile*, in the astronomical language of Bacon's time, meant a body drawing all others into its own sphere.

⁶ Every of them. *Each of them; every one of them.* 'And it came to pass in every of them.'—*Apocrypha*, 2 *Esdras* iii. 10.

⁷ 'More freely than is consistent with remembering the rulers.'

it is a sign the orbs are out of frame; for reverence is that wherewith princes are girt from God, who threateneth the dissolving thereof; 'Solvam cingula regum.'¹

So when any of the four pillars of government are mainly shaken, or weakened (which are religion, justice, counsel, and treasure), men had need to pray for fair weather. But let us pass from this part of predictions (concerning which, nevertheless, more light might be taken from that which followeth), and let us speak first of the materials of seditions, then of the motives of them, and thirdly of the remedies.

Concerning the materials of seditions, it is a thing well to be considered—for the surest way to prevent seditions (if the times do bear it), is to take away the matter of them; for if there be fuel prepared, it is hard to tell whence the spark shall come that shall set it on fire. The matter of seditions is of two kinds, much poverty, and much discontentment. It is certain, so many overthrown estates, so many votes for troubles. Lucan noteth well the state of Rome before the civil war:—

'Hinc usura vorax, rapidumque in tempore fœnus,
Hinc concussa fides, et multis utile bellum.'²

This same 'multis utile bellum,' is an assured and infallible sign of a State disposed to seditions and troubles; and if this poverty and broken estate³ in the better sort be joined with a want and necessity in the mean people, the danger is imminent and great—for the rebellions of the belly are the worst. As for discontentments, they are in the politic body like to humours in the natural, which are apt to gather a preternatural heat, and to inflame; and let no prince measure the danger of them by this, whether they be just or unjust—for that were to imagine people to be too reasonable, who do often spurn at their own good,—nor yet by this, whether the griefs⁴ whereupon they rise be in fact great or small; for they are the most dangerous discontentments, where the fear is greater than the feeling:

¹ 'I will loose the bond of kings.'—*Job* xii. 18.

² 'Hence usury voracious, and eager for the time of interest; hence broken faith, and war become useful to many.'—Lucan, *Phars.* i. 181.

³ Estate. Condition; circumstances. 'All who are any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate.'—*English Liturgy* ('Prayer for all Conditions of Men').

⁴ Griefs. Grievances.

'The king has sent to know the nature of your griefs.'—*Shakespeare*.

‘Dolendi modus, timendi non item’¹—besides, in great oppressions, the same things that provoke the patience do withal mate² the courage; but in fears it is not so—neither let any prince, or State, be secure concerning discontentments, because they have been often, or have been long, and yet no peril hath ensued—for as it is true that every vapour or fume³ doth not turn into a storm, so it is nevertheless true, that storms, though they blow over, divers times, yet may fall at last; and, as the Spanish proverb noteth well, ‘The cord breaketh at the last by the weakest pull.’

The causes and motives of seditions are, innovations in religion, taxes, alteration of laws and customs, breaking of privileges, general oppression, advancement of unworthy persons, strangers, dearths, disbanded soldiers, factions grown desperate; and whatsoever in offending people joineth and knitteth them in a common cause.

For the remedies, there may be some general preservatives, whereof we will speak: as for the just cure, it must answer to the particular disease, and so be left to counsel rather than rule.

The first remedy or prevention, is to remove, by all means possible, that material cause of sedition whereof we speak, which is, want and poverty in the estate:⁴ to which purpose serveth the opening and well-balancing of trade; the cherishing of manufactures; the banishing of idleness; the repressing of waste and excess by sumptuary laws; the improvement and husbanding of the soil; the regulating of prices of things vendible; the moderating of taxes and tributes; and the like. Generally, it is to be foreseen that the population of a kingdom (especially if it be not mown down by wars), do not exceed the stock of the kingdom which should maintain them: neither is the population to be reckoned only by number, for a smaller number, that spend more and earn less, do wear out an estate sooner than a greater number that live low and gather more: therefore the multiplying of nobility, and other degrees of quality,⁵ in an over-proportion to the common people, doth

¹ ‘There is a limit to the suffering, but none to the apprehension.’

² Mate. *To subdue; to quell.* See page 16.

³ Fume. *An exhalation.*

‘That memory, the warden of the brain, shall be a fume.’—*Shakespeare.*

⁴ Estate. *State.* See page 146.

⁵ Quality. *Persons of superior rank.* ‘I will appear at the masquerade dressed

speedily bring a State to necessity ; and so doth likewise an overgrown clergy ; for they bring nothing to the stock ; and in like manner, when more are bred scholars than preferments can take off.

It is likewise to be remembered, that, forasmuch as the increase of any estate must be upon the foreigner (for whatsoever is somewhere gotten, is somewhere lost), there be but three things which one nation selleth unto another—the commodity as nature yieldeth it, the manufacture, and the vecture, or carriage : so that, if these three wheels go, wealth will flow as in a spring tide. And it cometh many times to pass, that ‘*materiam superabit opus*’—that ‘the work and carriage is worth more than the material,’ and enricheth a State more ; as is notably seen in the Low Countrymen, who have the best mines above ground in the world.

Above all things, good policy is to be used, that the treasures and monies in a State be not gathered into few hands ; for otherwise, a State may have a great stock, and yet starve ; and money is like muck, not good except it be spread. This is done chiefly by suppressing, or, at the least, keeping a strait hand upon the devouring trades of usury, engrossing¹ great pasturages, and the like.

For removing discontentments, or, at least, the danger of them, there is in every State (as we know), two portions of subjects, the nobles and the commonalty. When one of these is discontent,² the danger is not great ; for common people are of slow motion, if they be not excited by the greater sort ; and the greater sort are of small strength, except the multitude be apt and ready to move of themselves. Then is the danger, when the greater sort do but wait for the troubling of the waters

in my feather, that the *quality* may see how pretty they will look in their travelling habits.’—*Addison*.

The common people still speak of the upper classes as ‘*the quality*.’ It is to be observed that almost all our titles of respect are terms denoting qualities. ‘*Her Majesty*,’ ‘*his Highness*,’ ‘*his Excellency*,’ ‘*his Grace*,’ ‘*the Most Noble*,’ ‘*the Honourable*,’ ‘*his Honour*,’ ‘*his Worship*.’

¹ Engrossing. *Forestalling*. ‘*Engrossing* was also described to be the getting into one’s possession, or buying up large quantities of any kind of victuals, with intent to sell them again.’—*Blackstone*.

‘What should ye do, then, should ye suppress all this flowery crop of knowledge, and new light sprung up ? Should ye set an oligarchy of twenty engrossers over it, to bring a famine upon our minds ?’—*Milton*.

² Discontent. *Discontented*.

amongst the meaner, that then they may declare themselves. The poets feign that the rest of the gods would have bound Jupiter; which he hearing of, by the counsel of Pallas, sent for Briareus, with his hundred hands, to come in to his aid¹—an emblem, no doubt, to show how safe it is for monarchs to make sure of the good-will of common people.

To give moderate liberty for griefs and discontentments to evaporate (so it be without too great insolency or bravery²), is a safe way; for he that turneth the humours back, and maketh the wound bleed inwards, endangereth malign ulcers and pernicious imposthumations.

The part of Epimetheus might well become Prometheus, in the case of discontentments; for there is not a better provision against them. Epimetheus, when griefs and evils flew abroad, at last shut the lid, and kept hope in the bottom of the vessel. Certainly, the politic and artificial nourishing and entertaining of hopes, and carrying men from hopes to hopes, is one of the best antidotes against the poison of discontentments: and it is a certain sign of a wise government and proceeding, when it can hold men's hearts by hopes, when it cannot by satisfaction; and when it can handle things in such manner as no evil shall appear so peremptory but that it hath some outlet of hope: which is the less hard to do, because both particular persons and factions are apt enough to flatter themselves, or, at least, to brave³ that which they believe not.

Also the foresight and prevention, that there be no likely or fit head whereupon discontented persons may resort, and under whom they may join, is a known, but an excellent point of caution. I understand a fit head to be one that hath greatness and reputation, that hath confidence with the discontented party, and upon whom they turn their eyes, and that is thought discontented in his own particular; which kind of persons are either to be won and reconciled to the State, and that in a fast and true manner, or to be fronted with some other of the same party that may oppose them, and so divide the reputation. Generally, the dividing and breaking of all factions and combinations that are adverse to the State, and setting them at

¹ Hom. *Il.* i. 398.

³ Brave. *To boast of.*

² Bravery. *Exultation.*

distance,¹ or, at least, distrust among themselves, is not one of the worst remedies; for it is a desperate case, if those that hold with the proceeding of the State be full of discord and faction, and those that are against it be entire and united.

I have noted, that some witty and sharp speeches, which have fallen from princes, have given fire to seditions. Cæsar did himself infinite hurt in that speech, ‘Sylla nescivit literas, non potuit dictare;’² for it did utterly cut off that hope which men had entertained, that he would at one time or other give over his dictatorship. Galba undid himself by that speech, ‘Legi a se militem, non emi;’³ for it put the soldiers out of hope of the donative. Probus, likewise, by that speech, ‘Si vixero, non opus erit amplius Romano imperio militibus;’⁴ a speech of great despair for the soldiers; and many the like. Surely princes had need, in tender matter and ticklish times, to beware what they say, especially in these short speeches, which fly abroad like darts, and are thought to be shot out of their secret intentions; for, as for large discourses, they are flat things, and not so much noted.

Lastly, let princes, against all events, not be without some great person, one or rather more, of military valour, near unto them, for the repressing of seditions in their beginnings; for, without that, there useth to be more trepidation in court upon the first breaking out of trouble than were fit; and the State runneth the danger of that which Tacitus saith—‘Atque is habitus animorum fuit, ut pessimum facinus auderent pauci, plures vellent, omnes paterentur;’⁵ but let such military persons be assured⁶ and well reputed of, rather than factious and

¹ Distance. *Enmity.*

‘Banquo was your enemy,
So is he mine; and in such bloody distance,
That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near’st of life.’—*Shakespeare.*

² ‘Sylla was ignorant of letters, and could not dictate.’ (This pun is attributed to Cæsar by Suetonius. *Vit. C. Jul. Cæs.* 77, 1.)

³ ‘He levied soldiers, and did not buy them.’—*Tac. Hist.* i. 5.

⁴ ‘If I live, the Roman Empire will need no more soldiers.’—*Flav. Ves. Vit. Prob.* 20.

⁵ ‘And such was the state of their minds, that the worst villany a few dared, more approved of it, and all tolerated it.’—*Hist.* i. 28.

⁶ Assured. *Not to be doubted; trustworthy.* ‘It is an assured experience, that flint laid at the root of a tree will make it prosper.’—*Bacon’s Natural History.*

popular—holding also good correspondence with the other great men in the State; or else the remedy is worse than the disease.

ANNOTATIONS.

‘Neither let any prince or State be secure concerning discontentments, because they have been often, or have been long, and yet no peril hath ensued. . . .’

Men underrate the danger of any evil that has been escaped. An evil is not necessarily unreal, because it has been often feared without just cause. The wolf does sometimes enter in, and make havoc of the flock, though there have been many false alarms. The consequence of feeling too secure, and not being prepared, may be most disastrous when the emergency does arise. And the existence of a power to meet the emergency is not the less important because the occasions for the exercise of it may be very few. If any one should be so wearied with the monotonous ‘All’s well’ of the nightly guardians of a camp, hour after hour, and night after night, as to conclude that their service was superfluous, and, accordingly, to dismiss them, much real danger, and much unnecessary apprehension, would be the result.

‘Let no prince measure the danger of discontentments by this whether the griefs whereupon they rise be great or small’

The importance of this caution with regard to ‘small griefs’ will not be denied by any one who has observed the odd *limitations* of power in those who seem despotic, and yet *cannot* do what seem *little* things. *E.g.*, when the Romans took possession of Egypt, the people submitted, without the least resistance, to have their *lives and property* at the mercy of a foreign nation: but one of the Roman soldiers happening to kill a *cat* in the streets of Alexandria, they rose on him and tore him limb from limb; and the excitement was so violent, that the

generals overlooked the outrage for fear of insurrection!—Claudius Cæsar tried to introduce a *letter* which was wanting in the Roman Alphabet—the consonant V as distinct from U,—they having but one character for both. He ordered that ¶ (an F reversed) should be that character. It appears on some inscriptions in his time; but he could not establish it, though he could KILL or *plunder* his *subjects at pleasure*. So can the Emperor of Russia; but he cannot change the *style*. It would displace the days of saints whom his people worship; and it would produce a formidable insurrection! Other instances of this strange kind of anomaly might doubtless be produced.

‘*The causes and motives of seditions are. . . .*’

Amongst the causes of sedition Bacon has not noticed what is, perhaps, the source of the most dangerous kinds of sedition, the keeping of a certain portion of the population in a state of helotism,—as subjects without being citizens, or only imperfectly and partially citizens. For, men will better submit to an undistinguishing despotism that bears down all classes alike, than to an invidious distinction drawn between privileged and subject classes.

On this point I will take the liberty of citing a passage from a former work:—

‘The exclusion from the rights of citizenship of all except a certain favoured class—which was the system of the Grecian and other ancient republics—has been vindicated by their example, and recommended for general adoption, by some writers, who have proposed to make *sameness of religion* correspond, in modern States, to the sameness of *race* among the ancients,—to substitute for their *hereditary citizenship* the profession of Christianity in one and the same *National Church*.

‘But attentive and candid reflection will show that this would be the worst possible *imitation* of one of the worst of the Pagan institutions; that it would be not only still more *unwise* than the unwise example proposed, but also even more opposite to the spirit of the *christian religion* than to the maxims of *sound policy*.

‘Of the system itself, under various modifications, and of its effects, under a variety of circumstances, we find abundant re-

cords throughout a large portion of history, ancient and modern; from that of the Israelites when sojourners in Egypt, down to that of the Turkish Empire and its Greek and other christian subjects. And in those celebrated ancient republics of which we have such copious accounts in the classic writers, it is well known that a man's being born of free parents within the territory of a certain State, had nothing to do with conferring civil rights; while his contributing towards the expenses of its government, was rather considered as the badge of an alien,¹ the imposing of a tax on the citizens being mentioned by Cicero² as something calamitous and disgraceful, and not to be thought of but in some extraordinary emergency.

'Nor were the proportionate *number's* at all taken into account. In Attica, the metœci or sojourners appear to have constituted about a third of the free population; but the Helots in Lacedæmon, and the subjects of the Carthaginian and Roman Republics, outnumbered the citizens, in the proportion probably of five, and sometimes of ten or twenty to one. Nor again were alien families considered as such in reference to a more *recent* settlement in the territory; on the contrary, they were often the ancient occupiers of the soil, who had been subdued by another race; as the Siculi (from whom Sicily derived its name), by the Siceliots or Greek colonists.

'The system in question has been explained and justified, on the ground that distinctions of Race implied important religious and moral differences; such that the admixture of men thus differing in the main points of human life, would have tended, unless one Race had a complete ascendancy, to confuse all notions of right and wrong. And the principle, accordingly, of the ancient republics,—which has been thence commended as wise and good—has been represented as that of making agreement in religion and morals the test of citizenship.

'That this however was not, at least in many instances, even the professed principle, is undeniable. The Lacedæmonians reduced to helotism the Messenians, who were of Doric race, like themselves; while it appears from the best authorities, that the kings of those very Lacedæmonians were of a different race from the people, being not of Dorian, but of Achaian extrac-

¹ *Matt.* xvii. 25.

² *De Off.* b. II, ch. xxi.

tion.¹ There could not have been therefore, at least universally, any such total incompatibility between the moral institutions and principles of the different races. The vindication, therefore, of the system utterly fails, even on the very grounds assumed by its advocates.

‘If, however, in any instance such an incompatibility did exist, or (what is far more probable) such a mutual dislike and jealousy, originating in a narrow spirit of clanship—as to render apparently hopeless the complete amalgamation of two tribes as fellow-citizens on equal terms, the wisest—the only wise—course would have been an entire separation. Whether the one tribe migrated in a mass to settle elsewhere, or the territory were divided between the two, so as to form distinct independent States,—in either mode, it would have been better for both parties, than that one should remain tributary subjects of the other. Even the expulsion of the Moors and Jews from Spain, was not, I am convinced, so great an evil, as it would have been to retain them as a degraded and tributary class; like the Greek subjects of the Turkish empire.

‘For, if there be any one truth which the deductions of reason alone, independent of history, would lead us to anticipate, and which again history alone would establish independently of antecedent reasoning, it is this: that a whole class of men placed permanently under the ascendancy of another as subjects, without the rights of citizens, must be a source, at the best, of weakness, and generally of danger, to the State. They cannot well be expected, and have rarely been found, to evince much hearty patriotic feeling towards a community in which their neighbours look down on them as an inferior and permanently degraded species. While kept in brutish ignorance, poverty, and weakness, they are likely to feel—like the ass in the fable—indifferent whose panniers they bear. If they increase in power, wealth, and mental development, they are likely to be ever on the watch for an opportunity of shaking off a degrading yoke. Even a complete general despotism, weighing down all classes without exception, is, in general, far more

¹ It is very remarkable that this fact has been adverted to, and prominently set forth by an author who, *in the very same work*, maintains the impossibility of different Races being amalgamated together in the same community. He appears to have quite forgotten that he had completely disproved his own theory.

readily borne, than invidious distinctions drawn between a favoured and a depressed race of subjects; for men feel an *insult* more than a *mischief* done to them;¹ and feel no insult so much as one daily and hourly inflicted by their immediate neighbours. A Persian subject of the Great King had probably no greater share of civil rights than a Helot; but he was likely to be less galled by his depression, from being surrounded by those who, though some of them possessed power and dignity, as compared with himself, yet were equally destitute of civil rights, and abject slaves, in common with him, of the one great despot.

‘It is notorious, accordingly, how much Sparta was weakened and endangered by the Helots, always ready to avail themselves of any public disaster as an occasion for revolt. The frightful expedient was resorted to of thinning their numbers from time to time by an organized system of massacre; yet, though a great part of the territory held by Lacedæmon was left a desert,² security could not be purchased, even at this price.

‘We find Hannibal, again, maintaining himself for sixteen years in Italy against the Romans; and though scantily supplied from Carthage, recruiting his ranks, and maintaining his positions, by the aid of subjects of the Romans. Indeed, almost every page of history teaches the same lesson, and proclaims in every different form, ‘How long shall these men be a snare unto us? Let the people go, that they may serve their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?’³ ‘The remnant of these nations which thou shalt not drive out, shall be pricks in thine eyes, and thorns in thy side.’⁴

‘But beside the other causes which have always operated to perpetuate, in spite of experience, so impolitic a system, the difficulty of *changing* it, when once established, is one of the greatest. The false step is one which it is peculiarly difficult to retrace. Men long debarred from civil rights, almost always become ill-fitted to enjoy them. The brutalizing effects of oppression, which cannot immediately be done away by its removal, at once furnish a pretext for justifying it, and make relief hazardous. Kind and liberal treatment, if very cautiously

¹ Ἀδικούμενοι, ὡς εἰκεν, οἱ ἄνθρωποι μᾶλλον ὀργίζονται, ἢ βιαζόμενοι.—Thucyd. b. i. § 77.

² Thucyd. b. iv.

³ Exodus x. 7.

⁴ Numbers xxxiii. 55.

and judiciously bestowed, will *gradually* and slowly advance men towards the condition of being worthy of such treatment; but treat men as aliens or enemies—as slaves, as children, or as brutes, and they will *speedily* and *completely* justify your conduct.’¹

‘*To which purpose (the removing of sedition) serveth
the repressing of waste and excess by sumptuary laws
. . . . the regulating of prices of things vendible.*’

Bacon here falls into the error which always prevails in the earlier stages of civilization, and which accordingly was more prevalent in his age than in ours—that of *over-governing*.

It may be reckoned a kind of puerility: for you will generally find young persons prone to it, and also those legislators who lived in the *younger* (*i.e.*, the earlier) ages of the world. They naturally wish to enforce by law everything that they consider to be good, and forcibly to prevent men from doing anything that is inadvisable. And the amount of mischief is incalculable that has been caused by this meddlesome kind of legislation. For not only have such legislators been, as often as not, mistaken, as to what really is beneficial or hurtful, but also when they have been right in their judgment on that point, they have often done more harm than good by attempting to enforce by law what had better be left to each man’s own discretion.

As an example of the first kind of error, may be taken the many efforts made by the legislators of various countries to restrict foreign commerce, on the supposition that it would be advantageous to supply all our wants ourselves, and that we must be losers by purchasing anything from abroad. If a weaver were to spend half his time in attempting to make shoes and furniture for himself, or a shoemaker to neglect his trade while endeavouring to raise corn for his own consumption, they would be guilty of no greater folly than has often been, and in many instances still is, forced on many nations by their governments; which have endeavoured to withdraw from agriculture to manufactures a people possessing abundance of

¹ *Essays on some of the Dangers to the Christian Faith.* 2nd edition, note F. pp. 212-217.

fertile land ; or who have forced them to the home cultivation of such articles as their soil and climate are not suited to, and thus compelled them to supply themselves with an inferior commodity at a greater cost.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that early hours are healthful, and that men ought not to squander their money on luxurious feasts and costly dress, unsuited to their means ; but when governments thereupon undertook to prescribe the hours at which men should go to rest, requiring them to put out their lights at the sound of the curfew-bell, and enacted sumptuary laws as to the garments they were to wear, and the dishes of meat they were to have at their tables, this meddling kind of legislation was always found excessively galling, and moreover entirely ineffectual ; since men's dislike to such laws always produced contrivances for evading the spirit of them.

Bacon, however, was far from always seeing his way rightly in these questions ; which is certainly not to be wondered at, considering that we, who live three centuries later, have only just emerged from thick darkness into twilight, and are far from having yet completely thrown off those erroneous notions of our forefathers. The regulating of prices by law still existed, in the memory of most of us, with respect to bread—and the error of legislating against engrossing of commodities has only very lately been exploded.

Many restrictions, of various kinds, have been maintained by persons who probably would not themselves have *introduced* them, but who have an over-dread of innovation ; urging that the burden of proof lies on those who advocate any change ; the *presumption* being on the side of leaving things unaltered. And as a general rule this is true. But in the case of any *restriction*, the presumption is the other way. For since no restriction is a good in itself, the burden of proof lies on those who would either introduce or continue it.

' Whatsoever is somewhere gotten is somewhere lost.'

This error—and it is a very hurtful one—was not exploded till long after Bacon's time. The following extract from the *Annual Register* for 1779 (Appendix, p. 114), may serve to show what absurd notions on political economy were afloat even in the memory of persons now living. The extract is

from a 'Plan by Dr. Franklin and Mr. Dalrymple for benefiting distant Countries.'

'*Fair commerce* is, where equal values are exchanged for equal, the expense of transport included. Thus, if it costs A in *England* as much labour and charge to raise a bushel of wheat, as it costs B in *France* to produce four gallons of wine, then are four gallons of wine the fair exchange for a bushel of wheat, A and B meeting at half distance with their commodities, to make the exchange. The advantage of this fair commerce is, that each party increases the number of his enjoyments, having, instead of wheat alone, or wine alone, the use of both wheat and wine.

'Where the labour and expense of producing both commodities are known to both parties, bargains will generally be fair and equal. Where they are known to one party only, bargains will often be unequal,—knowledge taking its advantage of ignorance.

'Thus, he that carries a thousand bushels of wheat abroad to sell, may not probably obtain so great a profit thereon as if he had first turned the wheat into manufactures, by subsisting therewith the workmen while producing those manufactures. Since there are many expediting and facilitating methods of working, not generally known; and strangers to the manufactures, though they know pretty well the expense of raising wheat, are unacquainted with those short methods of working, and thence being apt to suppose more labour employed in the manufactures than there really is, are more easily imposed on in their value, and induced to allow more for them than they are honestly worth. Thus, the advantage of having manufactures in a country, does not consist, as is commonly supposed, in their highly advancing the value of rough materials of which they are formed: since though six pennyworths of flax may be worth twenty shillings when worked into lace, yet the very cause of its being worth twenty shillings is, that, besides the flax, it has cost nineteen shillings and sixpence in subsistence to the manufacturer. But the advantage of manufactures is, that under their shape provisions may be more easily carried to a foreign market; and by their means our traders may more easily cheat strangers. Few, where it is not made, are judges of the value of lace. The importer may demand forty, and

perhaps get thirty shillings, for that which cost him but twenty.

‘ Finally, there seem to be but three ways for a nation to acquire wealth. The first is by *war*, as the *Romans* did, in plundering their conquered neighbours. This is *robbery*. The second by *commerce*, which is generally *cheating*. The third is by *agriculture*, the only *honest way*, wherein Man receives a real increase of the seed sown in the ground, in a kind of continual miracle wrought by the hand of God in his favour, as a reward for his innocent life and his virtuous industry.’

The reader will observe that, in this disquisition, *labour* is made the sole measure of value, without any regard to the questions, *whose labour?* or *how directed?* and, *with what results?* On this principle, therefore, if a Raphael takes only as much time and trouble in making a fine picture, as a shoemaker in making a pair of boots, he is a *cheat* if he receives more for his picture than the other for the boots! And if it costs the same labour to produce a cask of ordinary Cape-wine, and one of Constantia, they ought in justice to sell for the same price! I have heard a groom, who had served in the army, descant on the injustice of paying a soldier less than a general, though he had harder work. Thus our notions of morality, as well as of political economy, are thrown into disorder.

Yet such nonsense as this passed current in the days of our fathers. And it is only in our own days that people have been permitted to buy food where they could get it cheapest.

‘ *There useth to be more trepidation in court upon the first breaking out of troubles than were fit* ’

To expect to tranquillize and benefit a country by gratifying its agitators, would be like the practice of the superstitious of old with their *sympathetic powders* and ointments; who, instead of applying medicaments to the wound, contented themselves with *salving* the sword which had inflicted it. Since the days of Dane-gelt downwards,—nay, since the world was created,—nothing but evil has resulted from concessions made to intimidation.

ESSAY XVI. OF ATHEISM.

I HAD rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind; and, therefore, God never wrought miracles to convince¹ atheism, because his ordinary works convince it. It is true, that a little philosophy inclineth Man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion; for while the mind of Man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them, and go no farther; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate, and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity. Nay, even that school which is most accused of atheism, doth most demonstrate religion; that is, the school of Leucippus, and Democritus, and Epicurus—for it is a thousand times more credible, that four mutable elements and one immutable fifth essence, duly and eternally placed, need no God, than that an army of infinite small portions, or seeds, unplaced, should have produced this order and beauty without a divine marshal. The Scripture saith, 'The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God;'² it is not said, 'The fool hath thought in his heart;' so as³ he rather saith it by rote to himself, as that⁴ he would have, than that he can thoroughly believe it, or be persuaded of it; for none deny there is a God, but those for whom it maketh⁵ that there were no God. It appeareth in nothing more, that atheism is rather in the lip than in the heart of man, than by this, that atheists will ever be talking of that their opinion, as if they fainted in it themselves, and would be glad to be strengthened by the consent⁶ of others; nay, more, you shall have atheists strive to get disciples, as it fareth with other sects; and, which is most of all, you shall have them that will suffer for atheism, and

¹ Convince. *Convict; prove guilty.* 'To convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds.'—*Epistle of Jude.*

² *Psalm xiv. 1.*

³ *As. That.* See page 26.

⁴ *That. What.* See page 82.

⁵ For whom it maketh. *To whom it would be advantageous.*

⁶ Consent. *Agreement in opinion.* 'Socrates, by the consent of all excellent writers that followed him, was approved to be the wisest man of all Greece.'—*Sir J. Elyot.*

not recant: whereas, if they did truly think that there were no such thing as God, why should they trouble themselves? Epicurus is charged, that he did but dissemble for his credit's sake, when he affirmed there were Blest Natures, but such as enjoy themselves without having respect to the government of the world; wherein they say he did temporize, though in secret he thought there was no God; but certainly he is traduced, for his words are noble and divine; 'Non deos vulgi negare profanum: sed vulgi opiniones diis applicare profanum.'¹ Plato could have said no more; and although he had the confidence² to deny the administration, he had not the power to deny the nature. The Indians of the West have names for their particular gods, though they have no name for God; as if the heathens should have had the names Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, &c., but not the word Deus: which shows, that even those barbarous people have the notion, though they have not the latitude and extent of it; so that against atheists the very savages take part with the very subtilest philosophers. The contemplative atheist is rare—a Diagoras, a Bion, a Lucian perhaps, and some others: and yet they seem to be more than they are, for that all that impugn a received religion, or superstition, are, by the adverse part, branded with the name of atheists; but the great atheists indeed are hypocrites, which are ever handling holy things, but without feeling, so as they must needs be cauterized in the end.

The causes of atheism are, divisions in religion, if there be many; for any one main division addeth zeal to both sides, but many divisions introduce atheism: another is, scandal of priests, when it is come to that which St. Bernard saith, 'Non est jam dicere, ut populus, sic sacerdos; quia nec sic populus, ut sacerdos.'³ A third is, a custom of profane scoffing in holy matters, which doth by little and little deface the reverence of religion: and lastly, learned times, especially with peace and prosperity; for troubles and adversities do more bow men's minds to religion.

¹ 'It is not profane to deny the gods of the common people, but it is profane to apply to the gods the notions of the common people.'—*Diog. Laert.* x. 123.

² Confidence. *Boldness.*

³ 'It is not now to be said, As the people, so the priest; because the people are not such as the priests are.'

They that deny a God destroy a man's nobility, for certainly Man is of kin to the beasts by his body; and if he be not of kin to God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature. It destroys likewise magnanimity, and the rising human nature; for, take an example of a dog, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on when he finds himself maintained by a man, who to him is instead of a God, or *melior natura*¹—which courage is manifestly such as that creature, without that confidence² of a better nature than his own, could never attain. So Man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith which human nature in itself could not obtain; therefore, as atheism is in all respects hateful, so in this, that it depriveth human nature of the means to exalt itself above human frailty. As it is in particular persons, so it is in nations: never was there such a State for magnanimity as Rome. Of this State hear what Cicero saith: '*Quam volumus, licet, patres conscripti, nos amemus, tamen nec numero Hispanos, nec robore Gallos, nec calliditate Pœnos, nec artibus Græcos, nec denique hoc ipso hujus gentis et terræ domestico nativoque sensu Italos ipsos et Latinos; sed pietate, ac religione, atque hac una sapientia, quod decorum immortalium numine omnia regi, gubernarique perpeximus, omnes gentes nationesque superavimus.*'³

ANNOTATIONS.

'I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind.'

It is evident from this, that Bacon had seized the just view

¹ A better nature.

² Confidence. *Firm belief*. 'Society is built upon trust, and trust upon confidence of one another's integrity.'—*South*.

³ 'Let us be as partial to ourselves as we will, Conscript Fathers, yet we have not surpassed the Spaniards in number, nor the Gauls in strength, nor the Carthaginians in cunning, nor the Greeks in the arts, nor, lastly, the Latins and Italians of this nation and land, in natural intelligence about home-matters; but we have excelled all nations and people in piety and religion, and in this one wisdom of fully recognising that all things are ordered and governed by the power of the immortal gods.'—*Cic. De Har. Resp.* 9.

respecting *credulity*; seeing plainly that ‘to *disbelieve* is to believe.’ If one man believes that there is a God, and another that there is no God, whichever holds the less reasonable of these two opinions is chargeable with credulity. For, the only way to avoid credulity and incredulity—the two necessarily going together—is to listen to, and yield to, the best evidence, and to believe and disbelieve on good grounds.

And however imperfectly and indistinctly we may understand the attributes of God—of the Eternal Being who made and who governs all things—the ‘mind of this universal frame,’ the proof of the existence of a Being possessed of them is most clear and full; being, in fact, the very same evidence on which we believe in *the existence of one another*. How do we know that men exist? (that is, not merely Beings having a certain *visible* bodily form—for *that* is not what we chiefly imply by the word Man,—but *rational agents*, such as we call men). Surely not by the *immediate* evidence of our senses (since mind is not an object of sight), but by observing the *things performed*—the manifest result of rational contrivance. If we land in a strange country, doubting whether it be inhabited, as soon as we find, for instance, a boat, or a house, we are as perfectly certain that a man has been there, as if he had appeared before our eyes. Yet the atheist believes that ‘this universal frame is without a mind;’ that it was the production of chance; that the particles of matter of which the world consists, moved about at random, and accidentally fell into the shape it now bears. Surely the atheist has little reason to make a boast of his ‘incredulity,’ while believing anything so strange and absurd as that ‘an army of infinitely small portions or seeds, unplaced, should have produced this order and beauty without a divine marshal.’

In that phenomenon in language, that both in the Greek and Latin, nouns of the neuter gender, *denoting things*, invariably had the *nominative* and the *accusative* the same, or rather, had an accusative only, employed as a nominative when required,—may there not be traced an indistinct consciousness of the persuasion that a mere *thing* is not capable of being an agent, which a *person* only can really be; and that the possession of power, strictly so called, by physical causes, is not conceivable, or their capacity to maintain, any more than to produce at first,

the system of the Universe?—whose continued existence, as well as its origin, seems to depend on the continued operation of the great Creator. May there not be in this an admission that the laws of nature presuppose an agent, and are incapable of being the cause of their own observance?

‘Epicurus is charged, that he did but dissemble for his credit’s sake, when he affirmed there were Blessed Natures . . . wherein they say he did but temporize, though in secret he thought there was no God. But certainly he is traduced.’ . . .

It is remarkable that Bacon, like many others very conversant with ancient Mythology, failed to perceive that the pagan nations were in reality atheists. They mistake altogether the real character of the pagan religions.¹ They imagine that all men, in every age and country, had always designed to worship one Supreme God, the Maker of all things;² and that the error of the Pagans consisted merely in the false accounts they gave of him, and in their worshipping other inferior gods besides. But this is altogether a mistake. Bacon was, in this, misled by words, as so many have been,—the very delusion he so earnestly warns men against. The Pagans used the word which is translated ‘God;’ but in a different sense from us. For by the word God, we understand an Eternal Being, who made and who governs all things. And if any one should deny that there *is* any such Being, we should say that he was an atheist; even though he might believe that there do exist Beings

¹ See *Lessons on Religious Worship*, I. ii.

² See Pope’s *Universal Prayer*:—

‘Father of all, in every age,
In every clime adored;
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord.’

See also Rowe’s *Tragedy of Tamerlane*, Act 3, Sc. ii.—

‘Look round how Providence bestows alike
Sunshine and rain to bless the fruitful year,
On different nations, all of different faiths;
And (tho’ by several names and titles worshipp’d)
Heaven takes the various tribute of their praise;
Since all agree to own, at least to mean,
One best, one greatest, only Lord of all.
Thus when he viewed the many forms of Nature
He said that all was good, and bless’d the fair variety.’

superior to Man, such as the Fairies and Genii, in whom the uneducated in many parts of Europe still believe.

Accordingly, the Apostle Paul (*Ephes.* ii. 12) expressly calls the ancient Pagans atheists (*ἄθεοι*), though he well knew that they worshipped certain supposed superior Beings which they called gods. But he says in the *Epistle to the Romans*, that ‘they worshipped the creature more than¹ (that is, instead of) the Creator.’ And at Lystra (*Acts* xiv. 15), when the people were going to do sacrifice to him and Barnabas, mistaking them for two of their gods, he told them to ‘turn from those vanities, to serve the *living God who made heaven and earth*.’

This is what is declared in the first sentence of the *Book of Genesis*. And so far were the ancient Pagans from believing that ‘in the beginning God made the heavens and the earth,’ that, on the contrary, the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and many other natural objects, were among *the very gods they adored*. They did, indeed, believe such extravagant fables as Bacon alludes to, and which he declares to be less incredible than that ‘this universal frame is without a mind;’ and yet, they did also believe that it *is* without a mind; that is, without what he evidently means by ‘a mind’—an eternal, intelligent Maker and Ruler. Most men would understand by ‘an atheist’ one who disbelieves the existence of any such *personal agent*; though believing (as every one must) that there is some kind of *cause* for everything that takes place.

It may be added, that, as the pagan-worship has been generally of *evil* Beings,² so, the religions have been usually of a corresponding character. We read of the ancient Canaanites that ‘every abomination which the Lord hateth, have these nations done, *unto their gods*.’ And among the Hindus, the foulest impurities, and the most revolting cruelties, are not merely permitted by their religion, but are a part of their worship. Yet one may hear it said, not unfrequently, that ‘any religion is better than none.’ And a celebrated writer, in an article in a Review (afterwards republished by himself), deriding the attempt to convert the Hindus, represents their religion as being (though absurd) on the whole beneficial; because ‘it is better that a man should look for reward

¹ Παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα.

² See *Lessons on Religious Worship*, L. ii.

or punishment from a deity with a hundred arms, than that he should look for none at all.' But he forgot to take into account the question, 'rewarded or punished FOR WHAT?' The hundred-armed deity makes it an unpardonable sin to put into the mouth a cartridge greased with beef-fat, but a meritorious act to slaughter, with circumstances of unspeakable horror, men, women, and children, of Christians!¹

'A custom of profane scoffing in holy matters.'

In reference to 'the profane scoffing in holy matters,' it is to be observed that jests on sacred subjects are, when men are so disposed, the most easily produced of any; because the *contrast* between the dignified and a low image, exhibited in combination (in which the whole force of the ludicrous consists), is, in this case, the most striking. It is commonly said, that there is no wit in profane jests; but it would be hard to frame any definition of wit that should exclude them. It would be more correct to say (and I really believe that is what is really meant) that the practice displays no great *powers* of wit, because the subject matter renders it so particularly easy; and that (for the very same reason) it affords the least gratification (apart from all higher considerations) to judges of good taste; since a great part of the pleasure afforded by wit results from a *perception* of skill displayed, and difficulty surmounted.

I have said, 'apart from all higher considerations;' for surely, there is something very shocking to a well-disposed mind in such jests, as those, for instance, so frequently heard, in connexion with Satan and his agency. Suppose a rational Being—an inhabitant of some other planet—could visit this, our earth, and witness the gaiety of heart with which Satan, and his agents, and his victims, and the dreadful doom reserved for them, and everything relating to the subject, are, by many persons, talked of and laughed at, and resorted to as a source of amusement; what inference would he be likely to draw?

Doubtless he would, at first, conclude that no one believed anything of all this, but that we regarded the whole as a string of fables, like the heathen mythology, or the nursery tales of fairies and enchanters, which are told to amuse children. But when he came to learn that these things are not only *true*, but

¹ See *Lecture on Egypt*.

are actually believed by the far greater part of those who, nevertheless, treat them as a subject of *mirth*, what would he think of us then? He would surely regard this as a most astounding proof of the great art, and of the great influence of that Evil Being who can have so far blinded men's understandings, and so depraved their moral sentiments, and so hardened their hearts, as to lead them, not merely to regard with careless apathy their spiritual Enemy, and the dangers they are exposed to from him, and the final ruin of his victims, but even to find *amusement* in a subject of such surpassing horror, and to introduce allusions to it by way of a jest! Surely, generally speaking, right-minded persons are accustomed to regard wickedness and misery as most unfit subjects for jesting. They would be shocked at any one who should find *amusement* in the ravages and slaughter perpetrated by a licentious soldiery in a conquered country; or in the lingering tortures inflicted by wild Indians on their prisoners; or in the burning of heretics under the Inquisition. Nay, the very Inquisitors themselves, who have thought it their duty to practise such cruelties, would have been ashamed to be thought so brutal as to regard the sufferings of their victims as a subject of mirth. And any one who should treat as a jest the crimes and cruelties of the French Revolution, would generally be deemed more depraved than even the perpetrators themselves.¹

It is, however, to be observed, that we are not to be offended as if sacred matters were laughed at, when some folly that has been *forced into connexion* with them is exposed. When things really ridiculous are mixed up with religion, who is to be blamed? Not he who shows that they are ridiculous, and no parts of religion, but those who disfigure truth by blending falsehood with it. It is true, indeed, that to attack even error in religion with *mere* ridicule is no wise act; because good things may be ridiculed as well as bad. But it surely cannot be our duty to abstain from showing plainly that absurd things *are* absurd, merely because people cannot help smiling at them. A tree is not injured by being cleared of moss and lichens; nor truth, by having folly or sophistry torn away from around it.²

¹ See *Lectures on a Future State*.

² See *Cautions for the Times*.

It is a good plan, with a young person of a character to be much affected by ludicrous and absurd representations, to show him plainly, by examples, that there is *nothing* which may not be so represented. He will hardly need to be told that *everything* is not a mere joke; and he may thus be secured from falling into a contempt of those particular things which he may at any time happen to find so treated; and, instead of being led by 'profane scoffing on holy matters into atheism,' as Bacon supposes, he will be apt to pause and reflect that it may be as well to try over again, with serious candour, everything which has been hastily given up as fit only for ridicule, and to abandon the system of scoffing altogether; looking at everything on the right side as well as on the wrong, and trying how any system will look, standing upright, as well as topsy-turvy.

'The causes of atheism are'

Among the causes of atheism, Bacon has omitted one noticed by him as one of the causes of superstition, and yet it is not less a source of infidelity—'the taking an aim at divine matters by human, which cannot but breed mixture of imaginations.' Now, in human nature there is no more powerful principle than a *craving for infallibility* in religious matters. To examine and re-examine,—to reason and reflect,—to hesitate and to decide with caution,—to be always open to evidence,—and to acknowledge that, after all, we are liable to error;—all this is, on many accounts, unacceptable to the human mind,—both to its diffidence and to its pride,—to its indolence,—its dread of anxious cares,—and to its love of self-satisfied and confident repose. And hence there is a strong prejudice in favour of any system which promises to put an end to the work of inquiring, at once and for ever, and to relieve us from all embarrassing doubt and uncomfortable distrust. Consequently this craving for infallibility predisposes men towards the pretensions, either of a supposed unerring Church, or of those who claim or who promise immediate inspiration. And this promise of infallible guidance, not only meets Man's wishes, but his conjectures also. When we give the reins to our own feelings and fancies, such a provision appears as probable as it is desirable. If antecedently to the

distinct announcement of any particular revelation, men were asked what kind of revelation they would *wish* to obtain, and again, what kind of revelation they would think it the most reasonable and *probable* that God should bestow, they would be likely to answer *both* questions by saying, ‘Such a revelation as should provide some infallible guide on earth, readily accessible to every man; so that no one could possibly be in doubt, on any point, as to what he was required to believe and to do; but should be placed, as it were, on a kind of plain high road, which he would only have to follow steadily, without taking any care to look around him; or, rather, in some kind of vehicle on such a road, in which he would be safely carried to his journey’s end, even though asleep, provided he never quitted that vehicle. For,’ a man might say, ‘if a book is put into my hands containing a divine revelation, and in which are passages that may be differently understood by different persons,—even by those of learning and ability,—even by men professing each to have earnestly prayed for spiritual guidance towards the right interpretation thereof,—and if, moreover, this book contains, in respect of some points of belief and of conduct, no directions at all,—then there is a manifest *necessity* that I should be provided with an infallible interpreter of this book, who shall be always at hand to be consulted, and ready to teach me, without the possibility of mistake, the right meaning of every passage, and to supply all deficiencies and omissions in the book itself. For, otherwise, this revelation is, to *me*, no revelation at all. Though the book itself be perfectly free from all admixture of error,—though all that it asserts be true, and all its directions right, still it is no guide for *me*, unless I have an infallible certainty, on each point, what its assertions and directions *are*. It is in vain to tell me that the pole-star is always fixed in the north; I cannot steer my course by it when it is obscured by clouds, so that I cannot be certain where that star is. I need a *compass* to steer by, which I can consult at all times. There is, therefore, a manifest necessity for an infallible and universally accessible interpreter on earth, as an indispensable accompaniment—and indeed essential part—of any divine revelation.’

Such would be the reasonings, and such the feelings, of a man left to himself to consider what sort of revelation from

Heaven would be the most acceptable, and also the most *probable*,—the most adapted to meet his *wishes* and his *wants*. And thus are men predisposed, both by their feelings, and their antecedent conjectures, towards the admission of such pretensions as have been above alluded to.

And it may be added, that any one who is thus induced to give himself up implicitly to the guidance of such a supposed infallible authority, without presuming thenceforth to exercise his own judgment on any point relative to religion, or to think for himself at all on such matters,—such a one will be likely to regard this procedure as the very perfection of pious *humility*,—as a most reverent observance of the rule of ‘lean not to thine own understanding ;’ though in reality it is the very error of improperly leaning to our own understanding. For, to resolve to believe that God *must* have dealt with mankind just in the way that *we* could *wish* as the most *desirable*, and in the way that to *us* seems the most *probable*,—this is, in fact, to *set up ourselves as his judges*. It is to dictate to Him, in the spirit of Naaman, who *thought* that the prophet would recover him by a touch ; and who *chose* to be healed by the waters of Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, which he deemed better than all the waters of Israel.

But anything that falls in at once with men’s *wishes*, and with their *conjectures*, and which also presents itself to them in the guise of a *virtuous humility*,—this they are often found readily and firmly to believe, not only *without* evidence, but *against* all evidence.

And thus it is in the present case. The principle that every revelation from Heaven necessarily requires, as an indispensable accompaniment, an infallible interpreter always at hand,—this principle clings so strongly to the minds of many men, that they are even found still to maintain it after they have ceased to believe in any revelation at all, or even in the existence of a God.

There can be no doubt of the fact, that very great numbers of men are to be found,—they are much more numerous in some parts of the Continent than among us ;—men not deficient in intelligence, nor altogether strangers to reflection—who, while they, for the most part, conform externally to the prevailing religion, are inwardly utter unbelievers in Christianity; yet still

hold to the principle,—which, in fact, has had the chief share in *making* them unbelievers,—that the idea of a DIVINE REVELATION implies that of a universally accessible, INFALLIBLE INTERPRETER; and that the one without the other is an absurdity and contradiction.

And this principle it is that has mainly contributed to *make* these men unbelievers. For, when a tolerably intelligent and reflective man has fully satisfied himself that in point of fact no such provision *has* been made,—that no infallible and universally accessible interpreter does exist on earth (and this is a conclusion which even the very words of Paul, in his discourse at Miletus [*Acts xx.*] would be alone fully sufficient to establish)—when he has satisfied himself of the *non-existence* of this interpreter, yet still adheres to the principle of its supposed *necessity*, the consequence is inevitable, that he will at once reject all belief of Christianity. The ideas of a REVELATION, and of an unerring INTERPRETER, being, in his mind, inseparably conjoined, the overthrow of the one belief cannot but carry the other along with it. Such a person, therefore, will be apt to think it not worth while to examine the reasons in favour of any other form of Christianity, *not* pretending to furnish an infallible interpreter. This—which, he is fully convinced, is essential to a Revelation from Heaven—is, by some Churches, *claimed*, but not *established*; while the rest do not even claim it. The pretensions of the one he has listened to, and deliberately rejected; those of the other he regards as not even worth listening to.

The system, then, of reasoning from our own conjectures as to the necessity of the Most High doing so and so, tends to lead a man to proceed from the rejection of his own form of Christianity, to a rejection of revelation altogether. But does it stop here? Does not the same system lead naturally to ATHEISM also? Experience shows that that consequence, which reason might have anticipated, does often actually take place. He who gives the reins to his own conjectures as to what is *necessary*, and thence draws his conclusions, will be likely to find a *necessity* for such divine interference in the affairs of the world as does not in fact take place. He will deem it no less than necessary, that an omnipotent and all-wise and beneficent Being should interfere to rescue the oppressed from the oppressor,

—the corrupted from the corruptor,—to deliver men from such temptations to evil as it is morally impossible they should withstand;—and, in short, to banish *evil* from the universe. And, since this is not done, he draws the inference that there cannot possibly be a God, and that to believe otherwise is a gross absurdity. Such a belief he may, indeed, consider as useful for keeping up a wholesome awe in the minds of the vulgar; and for their sakes he may outwardly profess Christianity also; even as the heathen philosophers of old endeavoured to keep up the popular superstitions; but a real belief he will regard as something impossible to an intelligent and reflective mind.

It is not meant that all, or the greater part, of those who maintain the principle here spoken of, are Atheists. We all know how common it is for men to fail of carrying out some principle (whether good or bad) which they have adopted;—how common, to maintain the premises, and not perceive the conclusion to which they lead. But the *tendency* of the *principle* itself is what is here pointed out: and the danger is anything but imaginary, of its leading, in fact, as it does naturally and consistently, to Atheism as its ultimate result.

But surely, the Atheist is not hereby excused. To reject or undervalue the revelation God has bestowed, urging that it is no revelation to *us*, or an insufficient one, because unerring certainty is not bestowed also,—because we are required to exercise patient diligence, and watchfulness, and candour, and humble self-distrust,—this would be as unreasonable as to disparage and reject the bountiful gift of eye-sight, because men's eyes have sometimes deceived them—because men have mistaken a picture for the object imitated, or a mirage of the desert for a lake; and have fancied they had the evidence of sight for the sun's motion; and to infer from all this that we ought to blindfold ourselves, and be led henceforth by some guide who pretends to be himself not liable to such deceptions.

Let no one fear that by forbearing to forestall the judgment of the last day,—by not presuming to dictate to the Most High, and boldly to pronounce in what way He *must* have imparted a revelation to Man,—by renouncing all pretensions to infallibility, whether an immediate and personal, or a derived infallibility,—by owning themselves to be neither impeccable nor infallible

(both claims are alike groundless), and by consenting to undergo those trials of vigilance and of patience which God has appointed for them,—let them not fear that by this they will forfeit all cheerful hope of final salvation,—all ‘joy and peace in believing.’ The reverse of all this is the reality. While such Christians as have sought rather for *peace*,—for mental tranquillity and satisfaction,—than for *truth*, will often fail both of truth and peace, those of the opposite disposition are more likely to attain both from their gracious Master. He has taught us to ‘take heed that we be not deceived,’ and to ‘beware of false prophets;’ and He has promised us his own peace and heavenly comfort. He has bid us watch and pray; He has taught us, through his blessed Apostle, to ‘take heed to ourselves,’ and to ‘work out our salvation with fear and trembling;’ and He has declared, through the same Apostle, that ‘He worketh in us;’ He has bid us rejoice in hope; He has promised that He ‘will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear;’ and He has taught us to look forward to the time when we shall no longer ‘see as by means of a mirror, darkly, but face to face;’—when we shall know, ‘not in part, but even as we are known;’—when faith shall be succeeded by certainty, and hope be ripened into enjoyment. His precepts and his promises go together. His support and comfort are given to those who seek for them in the way He has Himself appointed.

ESSAY XVII. OF SUPERSTITION.

IT were better to have no opinion of God at all, than such an opinion as is unworthy of Him; for the one is unbelief, the other is contumely: and certainly superstition is the reproach of the Deity. Plutarch saith well to that purpose: ‘Surely,’ saith he, ‘I had rather a great deal, men should say there was no such a man at all as Plutarch, than that they should say there was one Plutarch, that would eat his children as soon as they were born;’¹ as the poets speak of Saturn: and as the contumely is greater towards God, so the danger is greater towards men. Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation—all which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, though religion were not,—but superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men; therefore atheism did never perturb² States; for it makes men wary of themselves, as looking no further; and we see the times inclined to atheism, as the time of Augustus Cæsar, were civil³ times; but superstition hath been the confusion of many States, and bringeth in a new *primum mobile*,⁴ that ravisheth all the spheres of government.

The master of superstition is the people, and in all superstition wise men follow fools; and arguments are fitted to practice in a reversed order. It was gravely said, by some of the prelates in the Council of Trent, where the doctrine of the schoolmen bare great sway, that the schoolmen were like astronomers, which did feign eccentrics and epicycles, and such engines of orbs, to save the phenomena, though they knew there were no such things; and, in like manner, that the schoolmen had framed a number of subtle and intricate axioms and theorems, to save the practice of the Church.

¹ Plut. *De Superstit.* x.

² Perturb. *To disturb.* ‘They are content to suffer the penalties annexed, rather than *perturb* the public peace.’—*King Charles I.*

³ Civil. *Orderly; tranquil; civilized.*

‘For rudest minds by harmony were caught,
And civil life was by the Muses taught.’—*Roscommon.*

⁴ *Primum mobile.* See page 152.

The causes of superstition are pleasing and sensual¹ rites and ceremonies; excess of outward and pharisaical holiness; over-great reverence of traditions, which cannot but load the Church; the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre; the favouring too much of good intentions, which openeth the gate to conceits and novelties; the taking an aim at divine matters by human, which cannot but breed mixture of imaginations; and, lastly, barbarous times, especially joined with calamities and disasters. Superstition, without a veil, is a deformed thing; for, as it addeth deformity to an ape to be so like a man, so the similitude of superstition to religion makes it the more deformed; and as wholesome meat corrupteth to little worms, so good forms and orders corrupt into a number of petty observances.

There is a superstition in avoiding superstition, when men think to do best if they go farthest from the superstition formerly received; therefore care would² be had that (as it fareth in ill purgings) the good be not taken away with the bad, which commonly is done when the people is the reformer.

ANTITHETA ON SUPERSTITION.

PRO.

‘Qui zelo peccant, non probandi, sed tamen amandi sunt.’

‘Those who go wrong from excess of zeal, cannot indeed be approved, but must nevertheless be loved.’

* * * *

CONTRA.

‘Ut simiæ, similitudo cum homine, deformitatem addit; ita superstitioni, similitudo cum religione.

‘As an ape is the more hideous for its resemblance to a man, so is superstition from its resemblance to religion.’

‘Præstat nullam habere de diis opinionem, quam contumeliosam.

‘It is better to have no opinion at all of the gods, than a degrading one.’

ANNOTATIONS.

Some use the word superstition to denote any belief which they hold to be absurd, if those who hold it can give no explanation of it. For example, some fancy that the hair will not grow well if it be cut in the wane of the moon; and that

¹ Sensual. *Affecting the senses.*

² Would. *Should.*

bees will not prosper unless the owner goes to the hives whenever a marriage or death occurs in his family, and announces it. But such a notion, though it may be a groundless fancy, is not to be called, in the strict sense, a superstition, unless it be connected with some sort of *religious* reverence for some supposed superhuman agent. Neither is superstition (as it has been defined by a popular though superficial writer) ‘an excess of religion’ (at least in the ordinary sense of the word *excess*), as if any one *could* have *too much* of true religion: but any *misdirection* of religious feeling; manifested either in showing religious veneration or regard to objects which deserve *none*; that is, properly speaking, the worship of false gods; or, in the assignment of such a degree, or such a kind of religious veneration to any object, as that object, though worthy of some reverence, does not deserve; or in the worship of the true God through the medium of improper rites and ceremonies.

It was the unsparing suppression of both those kinds of superstition which constituted the distinguished and peculiar merit of that upright and zealous prince, Hezekiah. He was not satisfied, like many other kings, with putting down that branch of superstition which involves the breach of the *first* Commandment—the setting up of false gods; but was equally decisive in his reprobation of the other branch also—the worship of the true God by the medium of prohibited emblems, and with unauthorized and superstitious rites. Of these two kinds of superstition, the latter is continually liable, in practice, to slide into the former by such insensible degrees, that it is often hard to decide, in particular cases, *where* the breach of the second Commandment ends, and that of the first begins. The distinction is not, however, for that reason useless; perhaps it is even the more useful on that very account, and was for that reason preserved, in those two Commandments, of which the second serves as a kind of outwork to the first, to guard against all gradual *approaches* to a violation of it—to keep men at a distance from infringing the majesty of ‘the jealous God.’ Minds strongly predisposed to superstition, may be compared to heavy bodies just balanced on the verge of a precipice. The slightest touch will send them over, and then, the greatest exertion that can be made may be insufficient to arrest their fall.

‘The one is unbelief, the other is contumely; and certainly superstition is the reproach of the Deity.’

Bacon might have said that both are unbelief; for, he who rashly gives heed to superstitious delusions, errs not from *excess of faith*, but from want of faith; since what is true in his belief, he receives not *because* it is *true*,—but because it agrees with some prejudice or fancy of his own; and he is right when he *is* right, only by chance. Having violated the spirit of the first Commandment, by regarding what is human with the veneration due to that only which is divine, his worship, even of the true God, becomes an abomination. ‘He has set up idols in his heart, and the Lord, the jealous God, will set his face against that man.’

And in reference to the contumely of God, it is a circumstance very remarkable, that, in many instances at least, superstition not only does not promote true religion, but even tends to generate profaneness. In proof of the strange mixture of superstition and profaneness that leads to the jokes and sallies of wit that are frequently heard among the Spanish peasantry, even in respect of the very objects of superstitious reverence, I can cite the testimony of an eminently competent witness. The like strange mixture is found in other Roman-catholic, and also in Pagan countries, particularly among the Hindus, who are described as habitually reviling their gods in the grossest terms, on the occasion of any untoward event. And in our own country nothing is so common a theme of profane jests among the vulgar of all ranks as the Devil; a large proportion of the superstition that exists being connected more or less with the agency of Evil Spirits.

This curious anomaly may perhaps be, in a great measure at least, accounted for, from the consideration, that, as superstition imposes a yoke rather of fear than of love, her votaries are glad to *take revenge*, as it were, when galled by this yoke, and to indemnify themselves in some degree both for the irksomeness of their restraints and tasks, and also for the *degradation* (some sense of which is always excited by a consciousness of slavish dread), by taking liberties *whenever they dare*, either in the way of insult or of playfulness, with the objects of their dread.

But how comes it that they ever do *dare*, as we see is the fact, to take these liberties? This will perhaps be explained by its being a characteristic of superstition to enjoin, and to attribute efficacy to, the mere performance of some specific outward acts,—the use of some material object, without any loyal, affectionate devotion of heart being required to accompany such acts, and to pervade the whole life as a ruling motive. Hence, the rigid observance of the precise directions given, leaves the votary secure, at ease in conscience, and at liberty, as well as in a disposition, to indulge in profaneness. In like manner a patient, who dares not refuse to swallow a nauseous dose, and to confine himself to a strict regimen, yet who is both vexed, and somewhat ashamed, at submitting to the annoyance, will sometimes take his revenge as it were, by abusive ridicule of the medical attendant and his drugs; knowing that this will not, so long as he does but take the medicines, diminish their efficacy. Superstitious observances are a kind of distasteful or disgusting remedy, which, however, is to operate if it be but swallowed, and on which accordingly the votary sometimes ventures gladly to revenge himself. Thus does superstition generate profaneness.

There was an ancient superstition, the *baptizing* (as it was called) of *church-bells*, which probably had some share in leading to a profanation existing among us,—the ceremony of what is called the *christening of a ship*. The Sacrament of Baptism is often called *christening*; i.e., making a person a *Christian*;—a member of the Church of Christ. And because it is usual to give a *name* on that occasion (though this is no essential part of the Sacrament), hence the word is often applied, though most irreverently, to the *naming* of a dog, a horse, or a ship. And in this last case, it is usual to go through the ceremony of dashing a bottle of wine against the ship's side; which is in fact a kind of *Parody* of the Sacrament of Baptism. This profanation is practised and countenanced by persons who, I doubt not, have no deliberate design to do anything profane; but who are culpably careless of the tendency of what they are doing. And it may be hoped that when they are brought to consider the matter, they will cease to give such occasion to irreligious scoffers.

‘As the contumely is greater towards God, so the danger is greater towards men.’

It is somewhat strange that it should be necessary to remark on the enormity—the noxious character—of all superstition. The mischiefs of superstition are, I conceive, much underrated. It is by many regarded, not as any sin, but as a mere harmless folly, at the worst;—as, in some instances, an amiable weakness, or even a salutary delusion. Its votaries are pitied, as in some cases subjected to needless and painful restraints, and undergoing groundless terrors;—sometimes they are ridiculed as enslaved to absurd and puerile observances: but whether pitied or laughed at, superstitious Christians are often regarded as likely—at least as not the *less* likely on account of their superstition,—to have secured the essentials of religion:—as believing and practising what is needful towards salvation, and as only carrying their faith and their practice, unnecessarily and unreasonably, to the point of weak credulity and foolish scrupulosity. This view of the subject has a strong tendency to confirm the superstitious, and even to add to their number. They feel that if there is any doubt, they are surely on the *safe* side. ‘Supposing I am in error on this or that point’ (a man may say), ‘I am merely doing something superfluous; at the worst I suffer some temporary inconvenience, and perhaps have to encounter some ridicule; but if the error be on the other side, I risk my salvation by embracing it; my present course therefore is evidently the safest—I am, after all, on the *safe* side.’—As if there were any *safe* side but the side of truth; and as if it could be safe to manifest distrust of a skilful physician by *combining* with his medicines all the nostrums of all the ignorant practitioners in the neighbourhood.

‘How far the superstition of any individual may be excusable or blameable in the sight of God, can be pronounced by Him alone, who alone is able to estimate each man’s strength or weakness, his opportunities of gaining knowledge, and his employment or neglect of those opportunities. But the same may be said of every other offence, as well as of those in question. Of superstition itself, in all its various forms and degrees, I cannot think otherwise than that it is not merely a

folly to be ridiculed, but a mischief to be dreaded ; and that its tendency is, in most cases, as far as it extends, destructive of true piety.

‘The disposition to reverence some superhuman Power, and in some way or other to endeavour to recommend ourselves to the favour of that Power, is (more or less in different individuals) a natural and original sentiment of the human mind. The great Enemy of Man finds it easier in most cases to misdirect, than to eradicate this. If an exercise for this religious sentiment can be provided—if this natural craving after divine worship (if I may so speak) can be satisfied—by the practice of superstitious ceremonies, true piety will be much more easily extinguished ; the conscience will on this point have been set at rest ; God’s place in the heart will, as it were, have been pre-occupied by an idol ; and that genuine religion which consists in a devotedness of the affections to God, operating in the improvement of the moral character, will be more effectually shut out, from the religious feelings of our nature having found another vent, and exhausted themselves on vanities of man’s devising.’¹

Too *religious*, in the proper sense of the word, we cannot be. We cannot have the religious sentiments and principles too strong, or too deeply fixed, if only they have a right object. We cannot *love* God too warmly—or *honour* Him too highly—or strive to *serve* Him too earnestly—or trust Him too implicitly ; because our duty is to love Him ‘with *all* our heart, and *all* our soul, and *all* our mind, and *all* our strength.’

But too religious, in another sense, we may, and are very apt to be ;—that is, we are very apt to make for ourselves too many *objects* of religious feeling.

Now, Almighty God has revealed Himself as the proper object of religion—as the one only Power on whom we are to feel ourselves continually dependent for all things, and the one only Being whose favour we are continually to seek. And, lest we should complain that an Infinite Being is an object too remote and incomprehensible for our minds to dwell upon, He has manifested Himself in his Son, the man Jesus Christ, whose history and character are largely described to us in the Gospels ;

¹ *Errors of Romanism*, 3rd edition, Essay I. § 3, pp. 34-37.

so that, to love, fear, honour, and serve Jesus Christ, is to love, fear, honour, and serve Almighty God; Jesus Christ being 'one with the Father,' and 'all the fulness of the Godhead' dwelling in Him.

But as long as our characters are not *like* God's, and we are unwilling to have them *made* like his, we are naturally averse to being brought thus into immediate contact with Him; and we shrink from holding (as it were) direct converse, or 'walking with' God,—from making Him the object towards which our thoughts and affections directly turn, and the person to whom we come straight in our prayers, and in whose control and presence we feel ourselves at all times. Hence, men wish to put between themselves and God some other less perfect Beings, with whom they can be more familiar, and who (they hope) will 'let them off' more easily, when they sin, than He would.

Now, indulging this disposition is not merely *adding to* true religion, but destroying, or going near to destroy it. For, when we have once made for ourselves such objects of religious feelings, they are objects so much more suited to our corrupt nature than God is, that we soon begin to let Him drop out of our minds entirely, whilst the inferior Powers engross all our serious worship. Thus the heathens, who began with adding the worship of other deities to that of the Supreme, ended with ceasing to worship the Supreme at all. Nor does it make so much difference, as one might at first suppose, whether we think of such inferior Beings as lords, having a direct control over us (as the Pagans commonly did), or as only *influencing* the Supreme through their favour with Him; as the Greeks and Roman-catholics commonly profess to think of the glorified saints; because he from whom I expect happiness or misery, becomes the uppermost object in my mind, whether he *give* or only *procure* it. If an agent has such influence with the landlord, that the agent's friends are sure of favour, and his foes are sure of hard treatment, it is the agent, and not the landlord, that the tenants will most think about; though all his power comes really from the landlord. Hence we may see the danger of this kind of superstition, by which the heart which should be God's is *forestalled*, as it were, by other objects.

‘*Atheism did never perturb States.*’

It may perhaps be inferred from this remark that Bacon entertained an opinion, held by some, that persons indifferent about all religions are the most likely to be tolerant of all, and to be averse to persecution and coercion. But this is a mistaken notion. Many persons, indeed, perhaps most, are tolerant or intolerant according to their respective *tempers*, and not according to their *principles*. But as far as principles are concerned, certainly the latitudinarian is the more likely to be intolerant, and the sincerely conscientious tolerant. A man who is careless about religious *sincerity*, may clearly see and appreciate the political convenience of religious *uniformity*; and if he has no religious scruples of his own, he will not be the more likely to be tender of the religious scruples of others: if he is ready himself to profess what he does not believe, he will see no reason why others should not do the same.

‘Mr. Brydone mentions in his Travels the case of an Englishman who attended Mass at a church in Naples through curiosity (which I am far from justifying), and on the elevation of the Host, remained standing, while those around knelt: for this he was reproved by a gentleman near him, as a violation of the rules of delicacy and good breeding, in thus shocking the feelings of the congregation: he answered that he did not believe in the real presence; ‘*No more do I, sir,*’ was the reply; ‘and yet you see I kneel.’

‘Now, without attempting to vindicate the conduct of the Englishman (who was under no compulsion to be present at a service in which he scrupled to join), it may be remarked that the Neapolitan, or Mr. Brydone, would probably have been disposed, if entrusted with the government of any country, to *compel* every one’s compliance, in all points, with whatever the feelings of the people required; not only to kneel before the Host, but to attend in processions the image of St. Januarius, &c., if their omitting it would be likely to give offence. The plea of conscientious scruple they would not have understood. ‘I do not believe so and so,’ would have been met by the ready answer, ‘No more do I; and yet I kneel.’¹

¹ *Kingdom of Christ*, Essay I. § 13, page 59, 4th edition.

‘As the Protestant is often inclined to look no further than to Romanism for the origin of persecution, so is the Infidel to regard Christianity as the chief cause of it. But both are mistaken. I am convinced that atheists, should they ever become the predominant party, would persecute religion. For it is to human nature we must trace both this and many other of those evils which each man is usually disposed to attribute to the particular system he is opposed to; and nearly the same causes, which generate especial hostility towards those who differ in faith from ourselves, would be found to exist in the atheists. They would feel themselves to be regarded by the Christians, not indeed as weak and credulous, but as perverse and profane: their confidence again in their own persuasion would be as likely to be shaken by the Christian, as the Christian’s, by them: all the human passions, in short, and all the views of political expediency, which have ever tempted the Christian to persecute, would have a corresponding operation with them.

‘Not that I conceive most of them to have, themselves, any suspicion of this, or to be insincere in their professed abhorrence of persecution. As *no* one *wishes* to persecute, so *they* probably do not anticipate (under the above-mentioned supposition) such a state of things as would seem to call for coercive measures. They imagine, probably, that when they had deprived christian ministers of endowments, had publicly proclaimed the falsity of the christian faith, and had taken measures for promoting education, and circulating books calculated to enlighten the people, the whole system of religious belief would gradually, but speedily, die away, and be regarded in the same light with tales of fairies. Such, doubtless, was the notion of some, whom I have known to express regret that Buonaparte did not employ the power he possessed in conferring so great a benefit on society as he might have done, ‘by abolishing Christianity.’ They were thinking, probably, of no more active measures than the withholding of the support and countenance of government.

‘In such expectations, every one who believes in Christianity must feel confident that they would be deceived. At first, indeed, appearances probably would be such as to promise favourably to their views. For, most of those who profess

Christianity merely for fashion's sake, or in compliance with the laws of their country, would soon fall away; and would be followed by many of such as wanted firmness to support ridicule, or the disfavour of those in power. But after a time the progress of irreligion would be found to have come to a stand. When the plants 'on the stony ground' had been all scorched up, those 'on the good soil' would be found still flourishing. Sincere Christians would remain firm; and some probably would be roused to exert themselves even with increased zeal; and some apostates would be reclaimed. Complaints would then be raised, that christian preachers decried, as profane and mischievous, the books put forth by authority; and that they represented the rulers as aliens from God, and men whose example should be shunned. Those indeed who had imbibed the true spirit of the Gospel, would not fail to inculcate, after the example of the Apostles, the duty of loyal submission, even to unchristian magistrates; but it is not unlikely that some would even take a contrary course, and would thus help to bring the imputation of sedition on christian preaching universally.

'The rabble, again, would be likely occasionally to assail with tumultuous insult and outrage, the Christians; who would in consequence be represented by their enemies as *occasioning* these tumults; especially if, as is likely, some among them did not submit patiently to such usage, or even partly provoked it by indiscretion. And however free the generality of the Christians might be from any just suspicion of a design to resort to lawless violence in the cause of their religion, still it would be evident that a revival and renewed diffusion of Christianity, such as they were furthering, must, after it should reach a certain point, endanger the continuance of power in the hands then wielding it; and that such a change of rulers would put a stop to the plans which had been commenced for the amelioration of society. Representing then, and regarding Christianity as the great obstacle to improvement, as the fruitful source of civil dissensions, and as involving disaffection to the then-existing government, they would see a necessity for actively interfering, with a view (not indeed like religious persecutors, to the salvation of souls, but) to the secular welfare of their subjects, and the security and prosperity of the civil com-

munity. They would feel themselves accordingly (to say nothing of any angry passions that might intrude) bound in duty to prohibit the books, the preaching, and the assemblies of Christians. The Christians would then, in violation of the law, circulate Bibles clandestinely, and hold their assemblies in cellars, and on sequestered heaths. Coercion would of course become necessary to repress these (as they would then be) illegal acts. And next but I need not proceed any further; for I find I have been giving almost an exact description of the state of things when the christian Churches were spreading in the midst of Heathenism. And yet I have only been following up the conjectures, which no one (believing in Christianity) could fail to form, who was but tolerably acquainted with human nature. For ‘such transactions,’ says the great historian of Greece, ‘take place, and always will take place (though varied in form, and in degree of violence, by circumstances), as long as *human nature* remains the same.’¹ Never can we be secured from the recurrence of the like, but by the implantation of some principle which is able to purify, to renovate, to convert that nature; in short, to ‘CREATE THE NEW MAN.’² Christianity, often as its name has been blazoned on the banners of the persecutor—Christianity, truly understood, as represented in the writings of its founders, and honestly applied, furnishes a preventive—the only *permanently* effectual preventive,—of the spirit of persecution. For, as with fraudulent, so it is also with coercive, measures employed in matters pertaining to religion: we must not expect that the generality will be so far-sighted, as always to perceive their ultimate inexpediency in each particular case that may occur; they will be tempted to regard the peculiar circumstances of this or that emergency as constituting an exception to the general rule, and calling for a departure from the general principle. Whereas the plainest Christian, when he has once ascertained, as he easily may, if he *honestly* consult the Scriptures, what the will of God is, in this point, will walk boldly forward in the path of his duty, though he may not see at every turn whither it is leading him; and with full faith in the divine wisdom, will

¹ Thucyd. B. iii. c. 82.

² Eph. iv. 24.

be ready, in pious confidence, to leave events in the hands of Providence.’¹

‘*The master of superstition is the people.*’

Bacon has here shown that he perceived what is too frequently overlooked—the real origin of priestcraft. I take leave to quote again from the *Errors of Romanism*. ‘We are accustomed to hear much of priestcraft—of the subtle arts of designing men, who imposed on the simplicity of an ignorant people, and persuaded them to believe that they, the priests, alone understood the nature of the Deity—the proper mode in which to propitiate Him—and the mysterious doctrines to which the others were to give their implicit assent; and the poor deluded people are represented as prevailed on against their better judgment, by the sophistry, and promises, and threats of these crafty impostors, to make *them* the keepers of their consciences—their mediators, and substitutes in the service of God, and their despotic spiritual rulers.

‘There is undoubtedly much truth in such a representation; but it leaves on the mind an erroneous impression, because it is (at the utmost) only *half* the truth.

‘If, indeed, in any country, priests had been Beings of a different species—or a distinct caste, as in some of the Pagan nations where the priesthood is hereditary;—if this race had been distinguished from the people by intellectual superiority and moral depravity, and if the people had been sincerely desirous of knowing, and serving, and obeying God for themselves, but had been persuaded by these demons in human form that this was impossible, and that the laity must trust *them* to perform what was requisite, in their stead, and submit implicitly to their guidance,—then, indeed, there would be ground for regarding priestcraft as altogether the work of the priests, and in no degree of the people. But we should remember, that in every age and country (even where they were, as the Romish priests were not, a distinct caste), priests must have been mere men, of like passions with their brethren; and though sometimes they might have, on the whole, a considerable intellectual

¹ Essay ‘On Persecution,’ 3rd series.

superiority, yet it must always have been impossible to delude men into the reception of such gross absurdities, if they had not found in them a readiness—nay, a craving—for delusion. The reply which is recorded of a Romish priest, is (not in the sight of God indeed, but), as far as regards any complaint on the part of the laity, a satisfactory defence; when taxed with some of the monstrous impostures of his Church, his answer was ‘The people wish to be deceived; and let them be deceived.’¹ Such, indeed, was the case of Aaron, and similar the defence he offered, for making the Israelites an image, at their desire. Let it not be forgotten, that the *first recorded* instance of departure from purity of worship, as established by the revelation to the Israelites, was forced on the *priest* by the *people*.

‘The truth is, mankind have an innate propensity, as to other errors, so, to that of endeavouring to serve God by proxy;—to commit to some distinct Order of men the care of their religious concerns, in the same manner as they confide the care of their bodily health to the Physician, and of their legal transactions to the Lawyer; deeming it sufficient to follow implicitly their directions, without attempting themselves to become acquainted with the *mysteries* of medicine or of law. For, Man, except when unusually depraved, retains enough of the image of his Maker, to have a natural reverence for religion, and a desire that God should be worshipped; but, through the corruption of his nature, his heart is (except when divinely purified) too much alienated from God to take delight in serving Him. Hence the disposition men have ever shown, to substitute the devotion of the priest for their own; to leave the duties of piety in his hands, and to let him serve God *in their stead*. This disposition is not so much the *consequence*, as itself the origin of priestcraft. The Romish hierarchy did but take advantage from time to time of this natural propensity, by ingrafting successively on its system such practices and points of doctrine as favoured it, and which were naturally converted into a source of profit and influence to the priesthood. Hence sprung—among other instances of what Bacon calls ‘the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre,’—the gradual transformation of the christian Minister—the Presbyter—into

¹ ‘Populus vult decipi, et decipiatur.’

the sacrificing Priest, the Hiereus (in Latin, 'sacerdos,' as the Romanists call theirs) of the Jewish and Pagan religions. Hence sprung the doctrine of the necessity of Confession to a priest, and of the efficacy of the Penance he enjoins, and of the Absolution he bestows. These corruptions crept in one by one; originating for the most part with an ignorant and depraved *people*, but connived at, cherished, consecrated, and successively established, by a debased and worldly-minded Ministry; and modified by them just so far as might best favour the views of their secular ambition. The system thus gradually compacted, was not—like Mahometism—the deliberate contrivance of a designing impostor. Mahomet did indeed most artfully accommodate his system to Man's nature, but did not wait for the gradual and spontaneous operations of human nature to produce it. He reared at once the standard of proselytism, and imposed on his followers a code of doctrines and laws ready framed for their reception. The tree which he planted did indeed find a congenial soil; but he planted it at once with its trunk full formed and its branches displayed. The Romish system, on the contrary, rose insensibly, like a young plant from the seed, making a progress scarcely perceptible from year to year, till at length it had fixed its roots deeply in the soil, and spread its baneful shade far around.

'Infecunda quidem, sed læta et fortia surgunt,
Quippe solo *natura* subest;'¹

it was the natural offspring of man's frail and corrupt character, and it needed no sedulous culture. It had its source in human passions, not checked and regulated by those who ought to have been ministers of the Gospel, but who, on the contrary, were ever ready to indulge and encourage men's weakness and wickedness, provided they could turn it to their own advantage. The good seed 'fell among thorns;' which, being fostered by those who should have been occupied in rooting them out, not only 'sprang up with it,' but finally choked and overpowered it.

'In all superstition wise men follow fools; and arguments are fitted to practice in a reversed order.'

'It is a mistake, and a very common, and practically not unimportant one, to conclude that the *origin* of each tenet or

practice is to be found in those arguments or texts which are urged in support of it;—that they furnish the cause, on the removal of which the effects will cease of course; and that when once those reasonings are exploded, and those texts rightly explained, all danger is at an end, of falling into similar errors.

‘The fact is, that in a great number of instances, and by no means exclusively in questions connected with religion, the erroneous belief or practice has arisen first, and the theory has been devised afterwards for its support. Into whatever opinions or conduct men are led by any human propensities, they seek to defend and justify these by the best arguments they can frame: and then, assigning (as they often do in perfect sincerity) these arguments as the *cause* of their adopting such notions, they misdirect the course of our inquiry; and thus the chance (however small it may be at any rate) of rectifying their errors, is diminished. For if these be in reality traceable to some deep-seated principle of our nature, as soon as ever one false foundation on which they have been placed is removed, another will be substituted; as soon as one theory is proved untenable, a new one will be devised in its place. And in the mean time, we ourselves are liable to be lulled into a false security against errors whose real origin is to be sought in the universal propensities of human nature.

‘Not only Romanism, but almost every system of superstition, in order to be rightly understood, should be (if I may so speak) read backwards. To take an instance, in illustration of what has been said, from the mythological system of the ancients: if we inquire why the rites of sepulture were regarded by them as of such vast importance, we are told, that according to their system of religious belief, the souls of those whose bodies were unburied were doomed to wander disconsolate on the banks of the river Styx. Such a tenet, supposing it previously established, was undoubtedly well calculated to produce or increase the feeling in question; but is it not much the more probable supposition, that the natural anxiety about our mortal remains, which has been felt in every Age and Country, and which many partake of who are at a loss to explain and justify it, drove them to imagine and adopt the theory which gave a rational appearance to feelings and practices already existing?

‘And the same principle will apply to the greater part of the Romish errors; the cause assigned for each of them will in general be found to be in reality its effect,—the arguments by which it is supported, to have gained currency from men’s partiality for the conclusion. It is thus that we must explain what is at first sight so great a paradox: the vast difference of effect apparently produced in minds of no contemptible powers, by the same arguments,—the frequent inefficacy of the most cogent reasonings,—and the hearty satisfaction with which the most futile are often listened to and adopted. Nothing is in general easier than to convince one who is prepared and desirous to be convinced; or to gain any one’s full approbation of arguments tending to a conclusion he has already adopted; or to refute triumphantly in his eyes any objections brought against what he is unwilling to doubt. An argument which shall have made one convert, or even*settled one really doubting mind, though it is not of course necessarily a sound argument, will have accomplished more than one which receives the unhesitating assent and loud applause of thousands who had already embraced, or were predisposed to embrace, the conclusion.’¹

‘It is of great practical importance to trace, as far as we are able, each error to its real source. For instance, if we suppose the doctrine of Transubstantiation to have in fact arisen from the misinterpretation of the text, we shall expect to remove the error by showing reasons why the passage should be understood differently:—a very reasonable expectation, where the doctrine *has sprung from the misinterpretation*, but quite otherwise where, as in this case, *the misinterpretation has sprung from the doctrine*. And that it *has* so sprung, besides the intrinsic improbability of men being led by the words in question to believe in Transubstantiation, we have the additional proof that the passage was before the eyes of the whole christian world for ten centuries before the doctrine was thought of.

‘Another exemplification of this principle may be found in the origin of the belief in Romish supremacy and infallibility. This had been gradually established before it was distinctly

¹ *Errors of Romanism*, 3rd edition, Essay IV. § 2, pp. 186-189.

claimed. Men did not submit to the authority, because they were convinced it was of divine origin, and infallible; but on the contrary, they were convinced of this, because they were disposed and accustomed so to submit. The tendency to 'teach for doctrines the commandments of men,' and to acquiesce in such teaching, is not the effect, but the cause, of their being taken for the commandments of God.¹

'The causes of superstition are—pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies.'

'The attributing of some sacred efficacy to the performance of an *outward act*, or the presence of some *material object*, without any inward devotion of the heart being required to accompany it, is one of the most prevailing characteristics of superstition. It is found, at least more or less, in most species of it. The tendency to disjoin religious observances (that is, what are intended to be such), from heartfelt and practical religion, is one of the most besetting evils of our corrupt nature. Now, no one can fail to perceive how opposite this is to true piety. Empty forms not only supersede piety by standing in its place, but gradually alter the habits of the mind, and render it unfit for the exercise of genuine pious sentiment. Even the natural food of religion (if I may so speak) is thus converted into its poison. Our very prayers, for example, and our perusal of the holy Scriptures, become superstitious, in proportion as any one expects them to operate as a charm—attributing efficacy to the mere words, while his feelings and thoughts are not occupied in what he is doing.²

'Every religious ceremony or exercise, however well calculated, in itself, to improve the heart, is liable, as I have said, thus to degenerate into a mere form, and consequently to become superstitious: but in proportion as the outward observances are the more complex and operose, and the more unmeaning or unintelligible, the more danger is there of superstitiously attaching a sort of magical efficacy to the bare outward act, independent of mental devotion. If, for example, even our prayers are liable, without constant watchfulness, to become a

¹ *Errors of Romanism*, 3rd edition, Essay IV. § 2, pp. 192, 193.

² See *Essays*, (2nd series,) Essay X. 'On Self-denial.'

superstitious form, by our ‘honouring God with our lips, while our heart is far from Him,’ this result is almost unavoidable when the prayers are recited in an unknown tongue, and with a prescribed number of ‘vain repetitions,’ crossings, and telling of beads. And men of a timorous mind, having once taken up a wrong notion of what religion consists in, seek a refuge from doubt and anxiety, a substitute for inward piety, and, too often, a compensation for an evil life, in an endless multiplication of superstitious observances;—of pilgrimages, sprinklings with holy water, veneration of relics, and the like. And hence the enormous accumulation of superstitions, which, in the course of many centuries, gradually arose in the Romish and Greek Churches.’

But were there no such thing in existence as a corrupt church, we are not to suppose that we are safe from superstition. There are many things which *cannot* be dispensed, that, though not superstitious in themselves, may be abused into occasions of superstition. Such are the Sacraments; Prayer, public and private; instructions from the Ministers of the word; buildings and days set apart, either wholly or partly, for these purposes. ‘In a word—where anything, not in itself moral or religious, is connected with religion, superstition fastens upon that, because it is ‘worldly,’ and lets the rest go. Thus, when God’s justice is described in Scripture as vengeance, to show us that it pursues the offender as sternly as a revengeful man *would* pursue his enemy, superstition fastens on the thought of God’s thirsting for *revenge*, and regards sin only as an offence which provokes in God a desire of inflicting pain on somebody. Again, when water, or bread and wine, are made *signs* of the power of the Holy Spirit, or of Christ’s body and blood sacrificed for us, superstition fastens on the water, or the bread and wine, as if they were the things themselves. When a place must be set apart for divine worship, superstition fancies that God dwells in that *place*, rather than in the hearts of the worshippers. When pictures or images of holy persons are set before us, superstition fastens on the image as if it were the reality. When rites and ceremonies are used to *express* our devotion, superstition *makes* them our devotion. When prayers have to be *said*, superstition makes the *saying* them, prayer. When good books are to be perused, superstition makes the

perusal, edification. When works are to be done *from a good motive*, superstition makes the outward action, the good works. When sufferings *for righteousness*' sake are commended, superstition takes the suffering for merit; and so in many other instances. It seizes ever on the outward—on that which is not moral; on that which strikes the senses or the imagination—and fastens there; while true religion, on the contrary, calls on us to 'lift up our heart' from the earthly to the heavenly, and use the outward as a help to the 'inward.'¹

'Too great reverence of traditions, over-loading the Church.'

Wonderful is the readiness with which many persons acquiesce in tradition, and rest satisfied with an appeal to a standard in all respects so vague and uncertain. For, besides the uncertainty of traditions which *are* received in the Church of Rome, there is an *additional* uncertainty to each individual Roman Catholic, *what* are so received. If a man when told, 'Such is the tradition of the Church,' should ask, 'how did *you* learn that?' it will be found, by pushing such inquiries, that the priest learnt it from a book, which *reports* that something has been *reported* by one of the ancient fathers as having been *reported* to him as believed by those who had heard it *reported* that the Apostles taught it. So that, to found faith on an appeal to such tradition, is to base it on the *report of a report of a report of a report*. The discussions one sometimes meets with, as to the 'credibility of traditions' generally, are as idle as Hume's, respecting the credit due *to testimony*. One might as well inquire, 'What degree of regard should be paid to books?' Common sense would dictate in reply, '*What* book?' as also '*Whose* testimony?—*what* tradition?' As each particular testimony, and each particular book, just so should each alleged tradition be examined on its own merits.

'Tradition is not the *interpreter of Scripture*, but Scripture is the interpreter of tradition. It is foolish to say that tradition is to be held to, rather than Scripture, *because* tradition was before Scripture; since the Scriptures (that is, written records) were used on purpose, after traditions had been tried, to

¹ *Cautions for the Times*, No. V. p. 81.

guard against the uncertainties of mere tradition. Scripture is the test; and yet many defend oral tradition on the ground that we have the Scriptures themselves by tradition. Would they think, that because they could trust most servants to deliver a letter, however long or important, therefore they could trust them to deliver its contents in a message by word of mouth? Take a familiar case. A footman brings you a letter from a friend, upon whose word you can perfectly rely, giving an account of something that has happened to himself, and the exact account of which you are greatly concerned to know. While you are reading and answering the letter, the footman goes into the kitchen, and there gives your cook an account of the same thing; which, he says, he overheard the upper servants at home talking over, as related to them by the valet, who said he had it from your friend's son's own lips. The cook relates the story to your groom, and he, in turn, tells you. Would you judge of that *story* by the letter, or the *letter* by the story?'¹

Well might Bacon speak of the 'over-loading' by tradition; for it does over-load, whether—according to the pretended distinction—it be made *co-ordinate* with, or *subordinate* to, Scripture. To make these countless traditions the substitute for Scripture by offering them to the people as proofs of doctrine, is something like offering to pay a large bill of exchange in farthings, which, you know, it would be intolerably troublesome to count or carry. And tradition, when made subordinate to, and dependent on, Scripture, is made so much in the same way that some parasite plants are dependent on the trees that support them. The parasite at first clings to, and rests on, the tree, which it gradually overspreads with its own foliage, till by little and little, it weakens and completely smothers it.

'Miraturque novas frondes, et non sua poma.'

But, with regard to this distinction attempted to be set up between co-ordinate and subordinate tradition, it is to be observed, that, 'if any human comment or interpretation is to be received implicitly and without appeal, it is placed practically, as far as relates to everything except a mere question of *dignity*, on a level with Scripture. Among the Parliamentarians at the

¹ *Cautions for the Times*, 1st edition, No. XI. pp. 20, 21.

time of the Civil War, there were many—at first a great majority—who professed to obey the King's commands, *as notified to them by Parliament*, and levied forces in the King's name, against his person. If any one admitted Parliament to be the sole and authoritative interpreter and expounder of the regal commands, and this without any check from any other Power, it is plain that he virtually admitted the sovereignty of that Parliament, just as much as if he had recognized their formal deposition of the King.¹

'The taking aim at divine matters by human.'

The desire of prying into mysteries relative to the invisible world, but which have no connexion with practice, is a characteristic of human nature ; and to it may be traced the immense mass of presumptuous speculations about things unrevealed, respecting God and his designs, and his decrees, 'secret to us,'² as well as all the idle legends of various kinds respecting wonder-working saints, &c. The sanction afforded to these by persons who did not themselves believe them, sprang from a dishonest pursuit of the expedient rather than the true ; but it is probable that the far greater part of such idle tales had not their *origin* in any deep and politic contrivance, but in men's natural passion for what is marvellous, and readiness to cater for that passion in each other ;—in the universal fondness of the human mind for speculative knowledge respecting things curious and things hidden, rather than (what alone the Scriptures supply) practical knowledge respecting things which have a reference to our wants. It was thus the simplicity of the Gospel was corrupted by 'mixture of imaginations.' When the illumination from Heaven—the rays of revelation—failed to shed the full light men desired, they brought to the dial-plate the lamp of human philosophy.

'Men think to do best if they go furthest from the superstition formerly received ; therefore care would be had that the good be not taken away with the bad.'

There is a natural tendency to 'mistake reverse of right for

¹ *Kingdom of Christ*, 4th edition, Essay II. § 26, p. 216.

² See 17th Article.

wrong.' It is not enough, therefore, to act upon the trite familiar rule of guarding especially against the error which on each occasion, or in each place, you find men especially liable to; but you must remember, at the same time, this other caution, not less important and far more likely to be overlooked—to guard against a tendency to a *reaction*—against the proneness to rush from one extreme into the opposite.

One cause of this is, that a painful and odious association is sometimes formed in men's minds with anything at all *connected* with that from which they have suffered much; and thus they are led to reject the good and the evil together. This is figured in the *Tale of a Tub*, by Jack's eagerness to be 'as unlike that rogue Peter as possible;' and he accordingly tears off the tail of his coat, and flings it away, because it had been overlaid with lace.

'Since almost every erroneous system contains truth blended with falsehood, hence its tendency usually is, first, to recommend the falsehood on account of the truth combined with it, and afterwards, to bring the truth into contempt or odium, on account of the intermixture of falsehood.

'In no point is the record of past times more instructive to those capable of learning from other experience than their own, than in what relates to the history of *reactions*.

'It has been often remarked by geographers that a river flowing through a level country of soft alluvial soil, never keeps a straight course, but winds regularly to and fro, in the form of the letter S many times repeated. And a geographer, on looking at the course of any stream as marked on a map, can at once tell whether it flows along a plain (like the river *Meander*, which has given its name to such windings) or through a rocky and hilly country. It is found, indeed, that if a straight channel be cut for any stream in a plain consisting of tolerably soft soil, it never will long continue straight, unless artificially kept so, but becomes crooked, and increases its windings more and more every year. The cause is, that any little wearing away of the bank in the softest part of the soil, on one side, occasions a *set* of the stream against this hollow, which increases it, and at the same time drives the water aslant against the opposite bank a little lower down. This wears away that bank also; and thus the stream is again driven against a part

of the first bank, still lower; and so on, till by the wearing away of the banks at these points on each side, and the deposit of mud (gradually becoming dry land) in the comparatively still water between them, the course of the stream becomes sinuous, and its windings increase more and more.

‘And even thus, in human affairs, we find alternate movements, in nearly opposite directions, taking place from time to time, and generally bearing some proportion to each other in respect of the violence of each; even as the highest flood-tide is succeeded by the lowest ebb.

‘We find—in the case of political affairs,—that the most servile submission to privileged classes, and the grossest abuses of power by these, have been the precursors of the wildest ebullitions of popular fury,—of the overthrow indiscriminately of ancient institutions, good and bad,—and of the most turbulent democracy; generally proportioned, in its extravagance and violence, to the degree of previous oppression and previous degradation. And again, we find that whenever men have become heartily wearied of licentious anarchy, their eagerness has been proportionably great to embrace the opposite extreme of rigorous despotism; like shipwrecked mariners clinging to a bare and rugged rock as a refuge from the waves.

‘And when we look to the history of *religious* changes, the prospect is similar. The formalism, the superstition, and the priestcraft which prevailed for so many ages throughout Christendom, led, in many instances, by a natural reaction, to the wildest irregularities of fanaticism or profaneness. We find antinomian licentiousness, in some instances, the successor of the pretended merit of what were called ‘good works;’ in others, the rejection altogether of the christian Sacraments, succeeding the superstitious abuse of them; the legitimate claims of every visible Church utterly disowned by the descendants of those who had groaned under a spiritual tyranny; pretensions to individual personal Inspiration, set up by those who had revolted from that tyranny; and in short, every variety of extravagance that was most contrasted with the excesses and abuses that had before prevailed.’

Such are the lessons which Reason and wide Experience would teach to those who ‘have ears to hear,’ and which the wisest men in various ages have laboured, and generally laboured

in vain, to inculcate. For, all Reason, all Experience, and the authority of all the wise, are too often powerless when opposed to excited party-spirit.¹

We cannot, then, be too much on our guard against reactions, lest we rush from one fault into another contrary fault. We should remember also that all admixture of truth with error has a double danger: some admit both together; others reject both. And hence, nothing is harmless that is mistaken either for a truth or for a virtue.

In no point, we may be assured, is our spiritual Enemy more vigilant. He is ever ready not merely to tempt us with the unmixed poison of known sin, but to corrupt even our food, and to taint even our medicine, with the venom of his falsehood. For, religion is a medicine of the soul; it is the designed and appropriate preventive and remedy for the evils of our nature. The subtle Tempter well knows that no other allurements to sin would be of much avail, if this medicine were assiduously applied, and applied in unadulterated purity; and he knows that superstition is the specific poison which may be the most easily blended with true religion, and which will the most completely destroy its efficacy.

It is for us then to take heed that the 'light which is in us be not darkness;' that our religion be kept pure from the noxious admixture of superstition; and it is for us to observe the errors of others with a view to our own correction, and to our own preservation, instead of contemplating 'the mote that is in our brother's eye, while we behold not the beam that is in our own eye.' Our conscience, if we carefully regulate, and diligently consult it, will be ready, after we have seen and condemned (which is no hard task) the faults of our neighbour, to furnish us (where there is need) with that salutary admonition which the self-blinded King of Israel received from the mouth of the Prophet, 'Thou art the man.'²

¹ See *Cautions for the Times*, No. XIX.

² Essay (4th series) 'On Superstition.'

ESSAY XVIII. OF TRAVEL.

TRAVEL, in the younger sort, is a part of education ; in the elder, a part of experience. He that travelleth into a country, before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel. That young men travel under some tutor, or grave servant, I allow¹ well ; so that he be such a one that hath the language, and hath been in the country before ; whereby he may be able to tell them what things are worthy to be seen in the country where they go, what acquaintances they are to seek, what exercises or discipline the place yieldeth ; for else young men shall go hooded, and look abroad little.

It is a strange thing that, in sea-voyages, where there is nothing to be seen but sky and sea, men should make diaries ; but in land-travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it—as if chance were fitter to be registered than observation. Let diaries, therefore, be brought in use.

The things to be seen and observed are the courts of princes, especially when they give audience to ambassadors ; the courts of justice, while they sit and hear causes ; and so of consistories ecclesiastic ; the churches and monasteries, with the monuments which are therein extant ; the walls and fortifications of cities and towns ; and so the havens and harbours, antiquities and ruins, libraries, colleges, disputations and lectures, where any are ; shipping and navies ; houses and gardens of state and pleasure near great cities ; armories, arsenals, magazines, exchanges, burses,² warehouses, exercises of horsemanship, fencing, training of soldiers, and the like ; comedies, such whereunto the better sort of persons do resort ; treasuries of jewels and robes ; cabinets and rarities ; and, to conclude, whatsoever is memorable in the places where they go—after all which, the tutors or servants ought to make diligent inquiry. As for

¹ Allow. *Approve*. 'The Lord alloweth the righteous.'—*Psalms*.

² Burse. *Exchange* ; *bourse*. 'So called from the sign of a purse being anciently set over the places where merchants met.) 'Fraternities and companies I approve of, such as merchants' *burses*.'—*Burton*.

triumphs,¹ masks, feasts, weddings, funerals, capital executions, and such shows, men need not be put in mind of them; yet they are not to be neglected. If you will have a young man to put his travel into a little room, and in short time to gather much, this you must do: first, as was said, he must have some entrance into the language before he goeth; then he must have such a servant, or tutor, as knoweth the country, as was likewise said; let him carry with him also some card, or book, describing the country where he travelleth, which will be a good key to his inquiry; let him keep also a diary; let him not stay long in one city or town, more or less as the place deserveth, but not long; nay, when he stayeth in one city or town, let him change his lodging from one end and part of the town to another, which is a great adamant² of acquaintance; let him sequester himself from the company of his countrymen, and diet in such places where there is good company of the nation where he travelleth; let him, upon his removes from one place to another, procure recommendation to some person of quality residing in the place whither he removeth, that he may use his favour in those things he desireth to see or know; thus he may abridge his travel with much profit.

As for the acquaintance which is to be sought in travel, that which is most of all profitable, is, acquaintance with the secretaries, and employed men of ambassadors; for so in travelling in one country he shall suck the experience of many. Let him also see and visit eminent persons in all kinds, which are of great name abroad, that he may be able to tell how the life agreeth with the fame. For quarrels, they are with care and discretion to be avoided—they are commonly for mistresses, healths, place, and words: and let a man beware how he keepeth company with cholerick and quarrelsome persons; for they will engage him into³ their own quarrels. When a traveller returneth home, let him not leave the countries where he hath travelled altogether behind him, but maintain a corre-

¹ Triumphs. *Public shows of any kind.*

‘Hold those justs and triumphs.’—*Shakespeare.*

² Adamant. *For loadstone.*

‘You drew me, you hard-hearted adamant.’—*Shakespeare.*

³ Into. *In.* ‘How much more may education induce by custom good habits into a reasonable creature.’—*Locke.*

spondence by letters with those of his acquaintance which are of most worth; and let his travel appear rather in his discourse, than in his apparel or gesture; and in his discourse let him be rather advised in his answers, than forward to tell stories: and let it appear that he doth not change his country manners for those of foreign parts, but only prick in some flowers of that¹ he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country.

ANNOTATIONS.

'Travel in the younger sort is a part of education; in the elder a part of experience.'

The well-known tale for young people, in the *Evenings at Home*, of 'Eyes and no Eyes,' might be applied to many travellers of opposite habits.

But there are, moreover, not a few who may be said to be 'one-eyed' travellers; who see a great deal of some particular class of objects, and are blind to all others. One, for example, will have merely the eye of a landscape-painter; another, of a geologist, or a botanist; another, of a politician; and so on. And the way in which some men's views are in this way limited, is sometimes very whimsical. For instance—A. B. was a man of superior intelligence and extensive reading, especially in ancient history, which was his favourite study. He travelled on the Continent, and especially in Italy, with an eager desire to verify the localities of celebrated battles and other transactions recorded by the Greek and Roman historians: and he succeeded admirably in fixing on the exact spot of almost every feat performed by Hannibal. And when these researches, in each place, were completed, he hurried away without having, or seeking, any intercourse with any of the *people* now inhabiting Italy, or thinking it worth while to make any inquiries as to their character and social condition; having set out with the

¹ That. *What; that which.* See page 82.

conviction that they were, and ever must be, quite unworthy of notice; and having, of course, left Italy with the same opinion on that point, with which he entered it; knowing as much of its inhabitants as of those in the interior of Africa; only, with the difference that, concerning the latter, he was *aware* of his own ignorance, and had formed *no* opinion at all.

And travellers who do seek for knowledge on any point, are to be warned against hasty induction, and rash generalization, and consequent presumptuous conclusions. For instance, a lady who had passed six weeks in Jamaica, in the house of a friend, whom she described as *eminently* benevolent, and *remarkably* kind to his slaves, spoke with scorn of any one who had not *been* in the West Indies, and who doubted whether slaves were always well treated. And Goldsmith, who had travelled on the Continent, decided that the higher classes were better off in Republics, but the lower classes in absolute Monarchies. Had he lived a few years longer he might have seen the French populace, goaded to madness by their intense misery under the monarchy, rushing into that awful Revolution.

During the short reign of Louis the Eighteenth, at his first restoration, a letter was received (by a person who afterwards regretted not having kept it as a curious document) from the nephew of one of our then ministers, saying that all the travellers from France with whom he had conversed, agreed in the conviction that the Bourbon Government was firmly fixed, and was daily gaining strength. The letter was dated on the very day that Buonaparte was sailing from Elba! and in a few days after, the Bourbons were expelled without a struggle. Those travellers must surely have belonged to the class of the one-eyed.

It often happens that a man seeks, and obtains, much intercourse with the people of the country in which he travels; but falls in with only *one particular set*, whom he takes for representatives of the whole nation. Accordingly, to Bacon's admonition about procuring letters of introduction, we should add a caution as to the point of '*from whom?*' or else the traveller may be *consigned*, as it were, to persons of some particular party, who will *forward* him to others, of their own party, in the next city, and so on through the chief part of Europe. And two persons who may have been thus treated, by those of

opposite parties, may perhaps return from corresponding tours, with as opposite impressions of the people of the countries they have visited, as the knights in the fable; of whom one had seen only the silver side of the shield, and the other only the golden. Both will perhaps record quite faithfully all they have seen and heard; and one will have reported a certain nation as full of misery and complaint, and ripe for revolt, when the other has found them prosperous, sanguine, and enthusiastically loyal.

In the days when travelling by post-chaise was common, there were usually certain *lines* of inns on all the principal roads; a series of good, and a series of inferior ones, each in connexion all the way along; so that if you once get into the worse line, you could not easily get out of it to the journey's end. The 'White Hart' of one town would *drive* you—almost literally—to the 'White Lion' of the next; and so on, all the way; so that of two travellers by post from London to Exeter or York, the one would have had nothing but bad horses, bad dinners, and bad beds, and the other, very good. This is analogous to what befalls a traveller in any new country, with respect to the impressions he receives, if he falls into the hands of a party. They *consign* him, as it were, to those allied with them, and pass him on, from one to another, all in the same connexion, each showing him and telling him, just what suits the party, and concealing from him everything else.

This is nowhere more the case than in Ireland; from a tour in which two travellers will sometimes return, each faithfully reporting what he has seen and heard, and having been told perhaps nothing *more* than the truth on any point, but only *one* side of the truth; and the impressions received will be perhaps quite opposite. The Irish jaunting-car, in which the passengers sit back to back, is a sort of type of what befalls many tourists in Ireland. Each sees a great deal, and reports faithfully what he has seen, one on one side of the road, and the other on the other. One will have seen all that is *green*, and the other, all that is *orange*.

It often, indeed, happens that men place themselves knowingly and wilfully in the hands of a party. But sometimes they are, from one cause or another, deluded into it, when they have no such thought. This sometimes takes place through

the ambiguity of words. For instance, if the designation by which, in some parts of the Continent, Protestants are usually known, as distinguished from Romanists, happens to be with us the title denoting a certain *party* in a Protestant Church, a foreign Protestant, coming among us, or holding intercourse with us, is likely to throw himself into the arms of that party whom, from the *name*, he supposes to comprise all who agree with him in religion.

ESSAY XIX. OF EMPIRE.

IT is a miserable state of mind to have few things to desire and many things to fear; and yet that commonly is the case with kings; who being at the highest, want matter of desire, which makes their minds more languishing, and have many representations of perils and shadows, which make their minds the less clear. And this is one reason also of that effect which the Scripture speaketh of, 'That the king's heart is inscrutable;'¹ for, multitudes of jealousies, and lack of some predominant desire, that should marshal and put in order all the rest, maketh any man's heart hard to find or sound. Hence it comes likewise, that princes many times make themselves desires, and set their hearts upon toys; sometimes upon a building; sometimes upon erecting of an Order; sometimes upon the advancing of a person; sometimes upon obtaining excellency in some art, or feat of the hand—as Nero for playing on the harp; Domitian for certainty of the hand with the arrow; Commodus for playing at fence; Caracalla for driving chariots; and the like. This seemeth incredible unto those that know not the principle, that the mind of Man is more cheered and refreshed by profiting in small things, than by standing at a stay² in great. We see also that kings that have been fortunate conquerors in their first years, it being not possible for them to go forward infinitely, but that they must have some check or arrest in their fortunes, turn in their latter years to be superstitious and melancholy; as did Alexander the Great, Dioclesian, and in our memory Charles V.; and others; for he that is used to go forward, and findeth a stop, falleth out of his own favour, and is not the thing he was.

To speak now of the true temper³ of empire, it is a thing rare and hard to keep, for both temper and distemper consist of contraries; but it is one thing to mingle contraries, another

¹ *Prov. xxv. 3.*

² Stand at a stay. *To stand still; not to advance.* 'Affairs of state seemed rather to *stand at a stay* than to advance or decline.'—*Hayward.*

³ Temper. *Due balance of qualities.* 'Health itself is but a kind of *temper*, gotten and preserved by a convenient mixture of contrarieties.'—*Arbutnot.*

'Between two blades, which bears the better *temper*?'—*Shakespere.*

to interchange them. The answer of Apollonius to Vespasian is full of excellent instruction. Vespasian asked him, 'What was Nero's overthrow?' He answered, 'Nero could touch and tune the harp well, but in government sometimes he used to wind the pins too high, sometimes to let them down too low ;'¹ and certain it is, that nothing destroyeth authority so much as the unequal and untimely interchange of power pressed too far, and relaxed too much.

This is true, that the wisdom of all these latter times in princes' affairs, is rather fine deliveries, and shiftings of dangers and mischiefs, when they are near, than solid and grounded courses to keep them aloof. But this is but to try masteries with fortune ; and let men beware how they neglect and suffer matter of trouble to be prepared ; for no man can forbid the spark, nor tell whence it may come. The difficulties in princes' business are many and great, but the greatest difficulty is often in their own mind ; for it is common with princes (saith Tacitus) to will contradictories : 'Sunt plerumque regum voluntates vehementes, et inter se contrariæ.'² For it is the solecism of power to think to command the end, and yet not to endure the mean.³

Kings have to deal with their neighbours, their wives, their children, their prelates or clergy, their nobles, their second nobles or gentlemen, their merchants, their commons, and their men of war ;⁴ and from all these arise dangers, if care and circumspection be not used.

First, for their neighbours, there can no general rule be given (the occasions are so variable), save one which ever holdeth—which is, that princes do keep due sentinel, that none of their neighbours do overgrow so (by increase of territory, by embracing of trade, by approaches, or the like), as⁵ they become more able to annoy them than they were ; and this is generally the work of standing councils to foresee and to hinder it. During that triumvirate of kings, King Henry VIII. of England,

¹ Philost. *Vit. Apoll. Tyan.* v. 28.

² 'The will of kings is, for the most part, vehement and inconsistent.'—Sallust, *B. J.* 113. (Not Tacitus.)

³ Mean. *Means.* 'The virtuous conversation of Christians was a *mean* to work the conversion of the heathen to Christ.'—Hooker.

⁴ Men of war (now only applied to ships). *Warriors ; soldiers.* 'And Saul set him over the *men of war.*'—1 *Sam.* xviii. 5.

⁵ As. *That.* See page 26.

Francis I., king of France, and Charles V., emperor, there was such a watch kept that none of the three could win a palm¹ of ground, but the other two would straightways² balance it, either by confederation, or, if need were, by a war, and would not in any wise take up peace at interest; and the like was done by that league (which Guicciardine saith was the security of Italy), made between Ferdinando, king of Naples, Lorenzious Medices, and Ludovicus Sforza, potentates, the one of Florence, the other of Milan. Neither is the opinion of some of the schoolmen to be received, that a war cannot justly be made, but upon a precedent³ injury or provocation; for there is no question but a just fear of an imminent danger, though there be no blow given, is a lawful cause of war.

For their wives, there are cruel examples of them. Livia is infamed⁴ for the poisoning of her husband; Roxolana, Solyman's wife, was the destruction of that renowned prince, Sultan Mustapha, and otherwise troubled his house and succession; Edward II. of England's queen had the principal hand in the deposing and murder of her husband. This kind of danger is then to be feared chiefly when the wives have plots for the raising of their own children, or else that they be advoutresses.⁵

For their children, the tragedies likewise of dangers from them have been many; and generally the entering of the fathers into suspicion of their children hath been ever unfortunate. The destruction of Mustapha (that we named before) was so fatal to Solyman's line, as the succession of the Turks from Solyman until this day is suspected to be untrue, and of strange blood, for that Selymus II. was thought to be supposi-

¹ Palm. *Hand's breadth*. 'The *palm*, or hand's breadth, is a twenty-fourth part of the stature.'—Holder.

² Straightways. *Immediately*.

'Like to a ship that having 'scap'd a tempest,
Is *straightway* claim'd and boarded with a pirate.'—*Shakespeare*.

³ Precedent. *Preceding*.

'Do it at once,
Or thy *precedent* services are all
But accidents unpurposed.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁴ Infamed. *Infamous*. 'Whosoever for any offence be *infamed*, by their ears hang rings of gold.'—*Sir T. More*.

⁵ Advoutress. *Adulteress*. (So called from breach of the marriage-vow.)

'In *advoutry*
God's commandments break.'—*Song*, 1550.

titious. The destruction of Crispus, a young prince of rare towardness,¹ by Constantinus the Great, his father, was in like manner fatal to his house, for both Constantinus and Constance, his sons, died violent deaths; and Constantius, his other son, did little better; who died, indeed of sickness, but after that Julianus had taken arms against him. The destruction of Demetrius, son to Philip II. of Macedon, turned upon the father, who died of repentance: and many like examples there are, but few or none where the fathers had good by such distrust, except it were where the sons were in open arms against them, as was Selymus I. against Bajazet, and the three sons of Henry II., king of England.

For their prelates, when they are proud and great, there is also danger from them; as it was in the times of Anselmus and Thomas Beckett, archbishops of Canterbury, who, with their crosiers, did almost try it with the king's sword; and yet they had to deal with stout and haughty kings—William Rufus, Henry I., and Henry II. The danger is not from that estate,² but where it hath a dependence of foreign authority, or where the churchmen come in and are elected, not by the collation of the king, or particular patrons, but by the people.

For the nobles, to keep them at a distance, it is not amiss; but to depress them may make a king more absolute, but less safe, and less able to perform anything that he desires. I have noted it in my history of King Henry VII. of England, who depressed his nobility, whereupon it came to pass, that his times were full of difficulties and troubles; for the nobility, though they continued loyal unto him, yet did they not co-operate with him in his business—so that in effect he was fain³ to do all things himself.

For their second nobles, there is not much danger from them, being a body dispersed: they may sometimes discourse high, but that doth little hurt; besides, they are a counterpoise to the higher nobility, that they grow not too potent; and, lastly,

¹ Towardness. *Docility*. 'He proved in his youth a personage of great *towardness*, and such as no small hope of him was conceived.'—*Holinshed*.

² Estate. *Order of men*. 'All the *estate* of the elders.'—*Acts* xxii. 5.

³ Fain. *Compelled; constrained*. 'Whosoever will hear, he shall find God; whosoever will study to know, shall be also *fain* to believe.'—*Hooker*.

'I was *fain* to forswear it.'—*Shakespeare*.

being the most immediate in authority with the common people, they do best temper popular commotions.

For their merchants, they are *vena porta*,¹ and if they flourish not, a kingdom may have good limbs, but will have empty veins, and nourish little. Taxes and imposts upon them do seldom good to the king's revenue, for that which he wins in the hundred² he loseth in the shire: the particular rates being increased, but the total bulk of trading rather decreased.

For their commons, there is little danger from them, except it be where they have great and potent heads, or where you meddle with the point of religion, or their customs, or means of life.

For their men of war, it is a dangerous state where they live and remain in a Body, and are used to donatives, whereof we see examples in the janizaries, and pretorian bands of Rome; but trainings of men, and arming them, in several places, and under several commanders, and without donatives, are things of defence, and no danger.

Princes are like to heavenly bodies, which cause good or evil times, and which have much veneration, but no rest. All precepts concerning kings are in effect comprehended in those two remembrances:³ 'Memento quod es homo,' and 'Memento quod es Deus,' or 'vice Dei'—the one bridleth their power, and the other their will.

ANTITHETA ON EMPIRE.

PRO.

'Felicitate frui, magnum bonum est; sed eam et aliis impertiri posse, adhuc majus.

'To enjoy happiness is a great good; but to be able to confer it also on others is a greater still.'

CONTRA.

'Quam miserum, habere nil fere, quod appetas; infinita, quæ metuas.

'How wretched is he who has hardly anything to hope, and many things to fear.'

¹ 'The great vein of the body.'

² Hundred. *A division of a county.* 'Lands taken from the enemy were divided into centuries or hundreds, and distributed amongst the soldiers.'—*Arbuthnot.*

³ 'Remember that thou art man,' and 'Remember that thou art God'—or 'God's vice-gerent.'

ANNOTATIONS.

'Kings have to deal with their neighbours,' &c.

Some persons, pretending to superior acuteness, are accustomed to represent the Sovereign, under the British Constitution, as a mere cypher,—a kind of puppet, moving as the strings are pulled, and possessing the semblance of power without any real power. The Sovereign, they say, though called 'Supreme,' can do nothing without his Ministers, who are virtually elected by the people, since no Minister can hold office for more than a very short time, without a majority in the House of Commons; the members of which are dependent on the will of their constituents. The only difference, therefore, they say, between our Government and that of the United States, is that they elect their Premier (under the title of President) once in four years, and we, as often as we think fit.

This, by the way, would of itself constitute a difference of no small importance. For, everyone would see that there would be a great difference between two steam-engines, one, provided (as is the actual practice) with a *safety-valve* which is forced open *whenever* the pressure exceeds a certain degree, and *not otherwise*, and the other having only a vent-hole opened at certain fixed times, *always* opened at those times, and *always* closed during the intervals.

But this difference, though very important, is far from being the sole, or the principal one. When, indeed, it happens that the public will is nearly unanimous—that the whole, or nearly the whole, nation are bent on some point of policy, or on the appointment or the exclusion of a certain Ministry, a compliance with their will is unavoidable. But in all cases (and these are the more numerous) in which there is a *division* in the popular will, and the opponents and supporters of certain measures or men are nearly equal, the Sovereign has, as it were, the casting voice, and can decide freely on the one side or on the other. Not only when there is a *perfect* equality of strength between two aspirants to office, can the Sovereign chuse whichever he will; but he can even bring into office and retain in office a Ministry which, if the question had been put to the vote in a popular

election, would have been in a minority, though a very large minority.

There have been in the United States several elections of President, in which the candidates were so nearly equal in votes, that no one can doubt that if the Americans had had the same constitution as ours, the Sovereign might have fixed on either as Premier. Now, this is undoubtedly a matter of practical importance; and whether it be thought a good or an evil that our Sovereign should have such a power, that he does possess it, and that it is no trifle, is evident.

If, therefore, our Sovereign is to be accounted a *cypher*, it must be, not in the sense in which that metaphor is ordinarily applied, but in a stricter sense. A cypher,—a mere round 0,—stands for nothing by *itself*; but adds tenfold to whatever figures are placed before it. And even so, our Sovereign, if standing alone, and at variance in his political views with all his subjects, or nearly all of them, is powerless; but as a supporter of this or of that person, party, or measure, that may be favoured by a considerable portion of his subjects, he may give the preponderance to either. 5 is less than 6; but 50, *i.e.* 5 with a cypher added, is more.

And after all, the same kind of check (in a minor degree, and in a less convenient form) on the power of the Sovereign, must exist even under a despotism. No despot can long govern completely against the will of nearly all those of his subjects—whether the People or the Army—who possess the physical force. A Dey in Barbary must have some—and these not inconsiderable in number—to execute his commands. He may, however, go on misgoverning longer than a constitutional king could do; and the check comes at last, not in the shape of a remonstrance, on which he might amend, but of a bow-string or a dagger.

On the whole, the degree, and the kind, of regal power, and of check to that power, existing under our constitution, are what the most judicious will perceive to be the best adapted to give steadiness to an administration, and to moderate the violence of political agitations in the most effectual way that is consistent with the liberty we enjoy. ‘*We* combine the advantages of different forms, by having a king holding the office of highest dignity, which no one of a different family can aspire

to, and remaining *fixed*, under all changes of Ministers and Parliaments, and yet restrained by Parliament from oppressing his subjects, or disregarding their wishes.

‘No good king will feel himself lowered in point of dignity by such restraints ; but the contrary. For as it is a nobler office to have the command of even a small number of *men* than a large herd of *cattle*, so it is more honourable to be the ruler of a free People than the absolute master of a multitude of slaves.

‘And moreover, in an absolute monarchy, a wise and worthy king, who had laboured hard for the welfare of his People, would be grieved at the thought that some of his successors, who might be foolish and tyrannical, would undo all the good he had been doing.

‘It should be remembered, too, that a certain degree of restraint on the power of a Ruler is the best safeguard against the danger of a *Revolution*, which might destroy his power altogether ; as the experience of what has often taken place in Europe, and other quarters of the world, plainly shows.

‘This is set forth in the following fable :—

‘ ‘ Once on a time a paper kite
Was mounted to a wondrous height,
Where, giddy with its elevation,
It thus expressed self-admiration :
‘ See how yon crowds of gazing people
Admire my flight above the steeple ;
How would they wonder if they knew
All that a kite *like me* can do ?
Were I but free, I’d take a flight,
And pierce the clouds beyond their sight ;
But ah ! like a poor pris’ner bound
My *string* confines me near the ground ;
I’d brave the eagle’s tow’ring wing,
Might I but fly without a string.’
It tugg’d and pull’d, while thus it spoke,
To break the string,—at last it broke ;
Depriv’d at once of all its stay,
In vain it try’d to soar away ;

Unable its own weight to bear,
It flutter'd downward in the air ;
Unable its own course to guide,
The winds soon plung'd it in the tide.
Ah ! foolish kite, thou hadst no wing ;
How couldst thou fly without a string ?
Sovereigns who wish to cast away
Wholesome restraints upon your sway,
Be taught in time, that moderation
Will best secure your lofty station.
Who soars uncheck'd may find too late
A sudden downfall is his fate.'

' There are many persons now living who can remember the time when almost all the countries of Europe, except our own, were under absolute governments. Since then, most of those countries have passed through, at least, one or two, and some of them six or seven, violent and bloody revolutions ; and none of them, even yet, have settled under a constitution which even the people of those States themselves would think better than ours, if as good.'¹

¹ This passage is from *Lessons on the British Constitution*, L. ii. § 2.

ESSAY XX. OF COUNSEL.

THE greatest trust between man and man, is the trust of giving counsel; for in other confidences men commit the parts of life, their lands, their goods, their children, their credit, some particular affair; but to such as they make their counselors they commit the whole—by how much the more they are obliged to all faith and integrity. The wisest princes need not think it any diminution to their greatness, or derogation to their sufficiency, to rely upon counsel. God himself is not without, but hath made it one of the great names of the blessed Son, the ‘Counsellor.’¹ Solomon hath pronounced that ‘in counsel is stability.’² Things will have their first or second agitation; if they be not tossed upon the arguments of counsel, they will be tossed upon the waves of fortune, and be full of inconstancy, doing and undoing, like the reeling of a drunken man. Solomon’s son found the force of counsel, as his father saw the necessity of it: for the beloved kingdom of God was first rent and broken by ill counsel—upon which counsel there are set for our instruction the two marks whereby bad counsel is for ever best discerned, that it was young counsel, for the persons, and violent counsel, for the matter.

The ancient times do set forth in figure both the incorporation and inseparable conjunction of counsel with Kings, and the wise and politic use of counsel by Kings; the one, in that they say Jupiter did marry Metis, which signifieth counsel, whereby they intend that sovereignty is married to counsel; the other in that which followeth, which was thus:—they say, after Jupiter was married to Metis, she conceived by him and was with child, but Jupiter suffered her not to stay till she brought forth, but ate her up, whereby he became himself with child, and was delivered of Pallas armed out of his head.³ Which monstrous fable containeth a secret of empire how kings are to make use of their counsel of state—that first, they ought to refer matters unto them, which is the first begetting or impregnation: but when they are elaborate, moulded, and shaped in the womb of

¹ *Isaiah* ix. 6.

² *Prov.* xx. 18.

³ *Hesiod. Theog.* 886.

their council, and grow ripe and ready to be brought forth, that then they suffer not their council to go through with the resolution¹ and direction, as if it depended on them, but take the matter back into their own hands, and make it appear to the world, that the decrees and final directions (which, because they come forth with prudence and power, are resembled to Pallas armed) proceeded from themselves, and not only from their authority, but (the more to add reputation to themselves) from their head and device.

Let us now speak of the inconveniences of counsel, and of the remedies. The inconveniences that have been noted in calling and using counsel, are three:—first, the revealing of affairs, whereby they become less secret; secondly, the weakening of the authority of princes, as if they were less of themselves; thirdly, the danger of being unfaithfully counselled, and more for the good of them that counsel, than of him that is counselled—for which inconveniences, the doctrine of Italy, and practice of France, in some kings' times, hath introduced cabinet councils—a remedy worse than the disease.

As to secrecy, princes are not bound to communicate all matters with all counsellors, but may extract and select—neither is it necessary, that he that consulteth what he should do, should declare what he will do; but let princes beware that the unsecreting² of their affairs comes not from themselves: and as for cabinet councils, it may be their motto, '*Plenus rimarum sum.*'³ One futile⁴ person, that maketh it his glory to tell, will do more hurt than many that know it their duty to conceal. It is true there be some affairs which require extreme secrecy, which will hardly go beyond one or two persons besides the king—neither are those counsels unprosperous,—for, be-

¹ Resolution. *Final decision.*

'I' the progress of this business,
Ere a determinate *resolution*,
The bishops did require a respite.'—*Shakespeare.*

² Unsecreting. *The disclosing; the divulging.* Shakespeare has the adjective 'unsecret:'

'Why have I blabbéd? Who should be true to us
When we are so *unsecret* to ourselves?'—*Shakespeare.*

³ 'Full of chinks am I.'—*Ter. Eun.* l. 11, 25.

⁴ Futile. *Talkative.* See page 82.

sides the secrecy, they commonly go on constantly in one spirit of direction without distraction; but then it must be a prudent king, such as is able to grind with a hand-mill—and those inward¹ counsellors had need also be wise men, and especially true and trusty to the king's ends, as it was with King Henry VII. of England, who in his greatest business imparted himself to none, except it were to Morton and Fox.

For weakness of authority the fable showeth the remedy—nay, the majesty of kings is rather exalted than diminished when they are in the chair of council,—neither was there ever prince bereaved of his dependencies by his council, except where there hath been either an over-greatness in one counsellor, or an over-strict combination in divers;² which are things soon found and holpen.³

For the last inconvenience, that men will counsel with an eye to themselves; certainly, 'Non inveniet fidem super terram,'⁴ is meant of the nature of times, and not of all particular persons. There be that are in nature faithful and sincere, and plain and direct, not crafty and involved—let princes, above all, draw to themselves such natures. Besides, counsellors are not commonly so united but that one counsellor keepeth sentinel over another; so that if any counsel out of faction or private ends, it commonly comes to the king's ear: but the best remedy is, if princes know their counsellors, as well as their counsellors know them:—

'Principis est virtus maxima nosse suos.'⁵

And on the other side, counsellors should not be too speculative into their sovereign's person. The true composition of a counsellor is, rather to be skilful in his master's business, than in his nature; for then he is like to advise him, and not to feed his humour. It is of singular use to princes if they take the opinions of their council both separately and together; for private opinion is more free, but opinion before others is more reverend. In private, men are more bold in their own humours,

¹ Inward. *Intimate*. 'All my *inward* friends abhorred me.'—*Job* xix. 19.

² Divers. *Several*; *sundry*.

'Divers new opinions, diverse and dangerous.'—*Shakespere*.

³ Holpen. *Helped*. 'They shall be *holpen* with a little help.'—*Dan*. xi. 34.

⁴ 'He will not find faith upon the earth.'—*Luke* xviii. 18.

⁵ 'The greatest virtue of a prince is to know his man.'

and, in consort,¹ men are more obnoxious to others' humours, therefore it is good to take both—and of the inferior sort, rather in private to preserve freedom,—of the greater, rather in consort to preserve respect. It is in vain for princes to take counsel concerning matters, if they take no counsel likewise concerning persons—for all matters are as dead images, and the life of the execution of affairs resteth in the good choice of persons; neither is it enough to consult concerning persons, 'secundum genera'² as in an idea of mathematical description, what the kind and character of the person should be; for the greatest errors are committed, and the most judgment is shown, in the choice of individuals. It was truly said, 'Optimi consiliiarii mortui'³—'Books will speak plain when counsellors blanch;' therefore it is good to be conversant in them, specially the books of such as themselves have been the actors upon the stage.

The councils at this day in most places are but familiar meetings, where matters are rather talked on than debated; and they run too swift to the order or act of council. It were better that, in causes of weight, the matter were propounded one day, and not spoken to till next day, 'in nocte consilium';⁴ so was it done in the commission of union between England and Scotland, which was a grave and orderly assembly. I commend set days for petitions; for both it gives the suitors more certainty for their attendance, and it frees the meetings for matters of estate,⁵ that they may 'hoc agere.'⁶ In choice of committees for ripening business for the council, it is better to chuse indifferent⁷ persons, than to make an indifferency by putting in those that are strong on both sides. I commend also standing commissions; as for trade, for treasure, for war,

¹ Consort. *Assembly; council.*

'In one consort there sat,
Cruel Revenge, and rancorous Despite,
Disloyal Treason, and heart-burning Hate.'—*Spenser.*

² 'According to their kinds.'

³ 'The dead are the best counsellors.'

⁴ 'In night is counsel.'

⁵ Matters of estate. *Public affairs.* 'I hear her talk of matters of estate and the Senate.'—*Ben Jonson.*

⁶ 'Do this one thing.'

⁷ Indifferent. *Neutral; not inclined to one side more than another.*

'Cato knows neither of them,
Indifferent in his choice to sleep or die.'—*Addison.*

for suits, for some provinces ; for where there be divers particular councils, and but one council of estate (as it is in Spain), they are, in effect, no more than standing commissions, save¹ that they have greater authority. Let such as are to inform councils out of their particular professions (as lawyers, seamen, mintmen,² and the like), be first heard before committees, and then, as occasion serves, before the council ; and let them not come in multitudes, or in a tribunitious³ manner ; for that is to clamour⁴ councils, not to inform them. A long table and a square table, or seats about the walls, seem things of form, but are things of substance ; for at a¹ long table, a few at the upper end, in effect, sway all the business ; but in the other form there is more use of the counsellors' opinions that sit lower. A king, when he presides in council, let him beware how he opens his own inclination too much in that which he propoundeth ; for else counsellors will but take the wind of him, and instead of giving free counsel, will sing him a song of 'placebo.'⁵

ANNOTATIONS.

'It is better to chuse indifferent persons, than to make an indifferency by putting in those that are strong on both sides.'

Bacon is here speaking of committees ; but there is, in reference to all legislative assemblies, a very general apprehension of a complete preponderance of some extreme party ; which arises, I conceive, from not taking into account the influence which, in every assembly, and every society, is always exercised (except in some few cases of very extraordinary excitement, and almost of

¹ Save. *Except.* 'Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, *save* one.'—

² Cor. xi.

² Mintman. *Skilled in coinage.* 'He that thinketh Spain to be some great overmatch for this estate, is no good *mintman*, but takes greatness of kingdoms according to their bulk and currency, and not after their intrinsic value.'—Bacon's *War with Spain.*

³ Tribunitious. *Like the Roman Plebeian Tribune.*

⁴ Clamour. *To stun with noise.* (Rarely used as an active verb.)

'Clamour your tongues.'—*Shakespeare.*

⁵ Placebo. *I will please.* Used to denote anything soothing.

temporary disorganization) by those who are in *a minority*. On this subject I take leave to extract a passage from *The Kingdom of Christ*.¹

‘It might appear at first sight—and such is usually the expectation of a child of ordinary intelligence, and of all those who are deficient in an intelligent study of history, or observation of what is passing in the world,—that whatever party might, in any meeting, or in any community, obtain a *majority*, or in whatever other way, a *superiority*, would be certain to carry out their own principles to the utmost, with a total disregard of all the rest; so that in a senate for instance, consisting, suppose, of 100 members, a majority, whether of 51 to 49, or of 70 to 30, or of 95 to 5, would proceed in all respects as if the others had no existence: and that no *mutual concessions* or compromises could take place except between parties exactly balanced. In like manner a person wholly ignorant of Mechanics might suppose that a body acted on by several unequal forces in different directions would obey altogether the strongest, and would move in the direction of that; instead of moving, as we know it ordinarily does, in a direction not coinciding with any one of them.

‘And experience shows that in human affairs as well as in Mechanics, such expectations are not well founded. If no tolerably wise and good measures were ever carried except in an assembly where there was a complete predominance of men sufficiently enlightened and public-spirited to have a decided preference for those measures above all others, the world would, I conceive, be much worse governed than it really is.

‘No doubt, the larger the proportion of judicious and patriotic individuals, the better for the community; but it seems to be the appointment of Providence that the prejudices, and passions, and interests of different men should be so various as not only to keep one another somewhat in check, but often to bring about, or greatly help to bring about, *mixed* results, often far preferable to anything devised or aimed at by *any* of the parties.

‘The British Constitution, for instance, no intelligent reader

¹ *Kingdom of Christ*, 4th edition, Appendix to Essay II. note O, pp. 348, 349, 351, 352.

of history would regard as wholly or chiefly the work of men fully sensible of the advantages of a government so mixed and balanced. It was in great measure the result of the efforts, partially neutralizing each other, of men who leaned, more or less, some of them towards pure Monarchy, and others towards Republicanism. And again, though no one can doubt how great an advance (it is as yet only an *advance*) of the principle of religious *toleration*, and of making a final appeal to *Scripture alone*, is due to the Reformation, yet the Reformers were slow in embracing these principles. They were at first nearly as much disposed as their opponents to force their own interpretations of Scripture on every one, and to call in the magistrate to suppress heresy by force. But not being able to agree among themselves *whose* interpretation of Scripture should be received as authoritative, and *who* should be entrusted with the sword that was to extirpate heresy, compromises and mutual concessions gradually led more and more to the *practical* adoption of principles whose theoretical truth and justice is, even yet, not universally perceived.

‘And similar instances may be found in every part of history. Without entering into a detailed examination of the particular mode in which, on each occasion, a superior party is influenced by those opposed to them—either from reluctance to drive them to desperation, or otherwise,—certain it is, that, looking only to the results,—the practical working of any government,—in the long run, and in the general course of measures,—we do find something corresponding to the composition of forces in Mechanics; and we find, oftener than not, that the course actually pursued is better (however faulty) than could have been calculated on from the character of the greater part of those who administer the government. The wisest and most moderate, even when they form but a small minority, are often enabled amidst the conflict of those in opposite extremes, to bring about decisions, less wise and just indeed than they themselves would have desired, but far better than those of either of the extreme parties.

‘Of course we are not to expect the same exact uniformity of effects in human affairs as in Mechanics. It is not meant that each decision of every Assembly or Body of men will necessarily be the precise ‘resultant’ (as it is called in Natural Philosophy)

of the several forces operating,—the various parties existing in the Assembly. Some one or two votes will occasionally be passed, by a majority—perhaps by no very large majority,—in utter defiance of the sentiments of the rest. But in the long run—in any *course* of enactments or proceedings,—some degree of influence will seldom fail to be exercised by those who are in a minority. This influence, again, will not always correspond, in kind, and in degree, with what takes place in Mechanics. For instance, in the material world, the impulses which keep a body *motionless* must be exactly *opposite*, and exactly *balanced*; but in human affairs, it will often happen that there may be a considerable majority in favour of taking some step, or making some enactment, yet a disagreement as to some details will give a preponderance to a smaller party who are against any such step. When the majority, for example, of a garrison are disposed to make an attack on the besiegers, but are not agreed as to the time and mode of it, the decision may be on the side of a minority who deem it better to remain on the defensive. Accordingly, it is matter of common remark that a ‘Council of War’ rarely ends in a resolution to fight a battle.

‘The results of this cause are sometimes evil, and sometimes—perhaps more frequently—good. Many troublesome and pernicious restrictions and enactments, as well as some beneficial ones, are in this way prevented.

‘And again the *delay* and *discussion* which ensue when powerful parties are at all nearly balanced, afford an opening for arguments: and this, on the whole, and in the long run, gives an advantage (more or less, according to the state of intellectual culture and civilization) to the most wise and moderate,—in short, to those (even though but a small portion, numerically, of the assembly) who have the best arguments on their side. Some, in each of the opposed parties, may thus be influenced by reason, who would not have *waited to listen* to reason, but for the check they receive from each other. And thus it will sometimes happen that a result may ensue even better than could have been calculated from the mere mechanical computation of the acting forces.’

The above views are the more important, because any one who does not embrace them, will be likely, on contemplating any wise institution or enactment of *former times*, to be thrown

into indolent despondency, if he find, as he often will, that the majority of those around us do not seem to come up to the standard which those institutions and enactments appear to him to imply. He takes for granted that the whole, or the chief part, of the members of those assemblies, &c., in which such and such measures were carried, must have been men of a corresponding degree of good sense, and moderation, and public spirit: and perceiving (as he thinks) that an assembly of such men could not now be found, he concludes that wisdom and goodness (in governments at least) must have died with our ancestors; or at least that no good is *at present* to be hoped from any government. And yet perhaps the truth will be that the greater part of the very assemblies whose measures he is admiring may have consisted of men of several parties, each of which would, *if left entirely to itself*, have made a much worse decision than the one actually adopted; and *that one* may have been such, as, though not actually to coincide with, yet most nearly to approach to, the opinions of the wisest and best members of the assembly, though those may have been but a small minority. And it may be therefore, that he may have around him the materials of an assembly not at all inferior in probity or intelligence to that which he is contemplating with despairing admiration.

‘I commend also standing Commissions.’

If a standing Commission were appointed by Parliament, consisting of three or four *eminent* Lawyers, with handsome salaries, whose sole business should be to *draw up Bills* according to the instructions given by each proposer, this would save an infinity of litigation, and confused and fruitless legislation. No Bill should then be ever *altered* in its passage through either House; nor should there ever be such a thing as ‘a Committee of the whole House;’ that great source of confusion; but each Bill should be either *passed* as it is, or *rejected*, or *referred back* to the ‘standing Commission’ for amendment. And thus we should almost entirely escape the absurdities and inconveniences of ‘An Act to amend an Act, to amend an Act,’ &c. &c.

‘ *A king, when he presides in council* ’

It is remarkable how a change of very great importance in our system of government was brought about by pure accident. The custom of the king's being *present* in a cabinet council of his ministers, which was the obvious, and had always been the usual state of things, was put an end to when the Hanoverian princes came to the throne, from their ignorance of the English language. The advantage thence resulting, of ministers laying before the sovereign the result of their full and free deliberations—an advantage not at all originally contemplated,—caused the custom to be continued, and so established that it is most unlikely it should ever be changed.

ESSAY XXI. OF DELAYS.

FORTUNE is like the market, where, many times, if you can stay a little, the price will fall; and again, it is sometimes like Sibylla's¹ offer, which at first offereth the commodity at full, then consumeth part and part, and still holdeth up the price; for occasion (as it is in the common verse) turneth a bald noddle after she hath presented her locks in front, and no hold taken; or, at least, turneth the handle of the bottle first to be received, and after the belly,² which is hard to clasp.³ There is surely no greater wisdom than well to time the beginnings and onsets of things. Dangers are no more light, if they once seem light; and more dangers have deceived men than forced them: nay, it were better to meet some dangers half way, though they come nothing near, than to keep too long a watch upon their approaches; for if a man watch too long, it is odds he will fall asleep. On the other side, to be deceived with too long shadows (as some have been when the moon was low, and shone on their enemies' backs), and so to shoot off before the time, or to teach dangers to come on, by over-early buckling⁴ towards them, is another extreme. The ripeness or unripeness of the occasion (as we said) must ever be well weighed; and generally it is good to commit the beginnings of all great actions to Argus with his hundred eyes, and the ends to Briareus with his hundred hands—first to watch, and then to speed; for the helmet of Pluto,⁵ which maketh the politic man go invisible, is secrecy in the counsel, and celerity in the execution; for when things are once come to the execution, there is no secrecy comparable to celerity—like the motion of a bullet in the air, which flieth so swift as it outruns the eye.

¹ Sibylla. *The Sibyl.*

² Belly. *That protuberance or cavity of anything resembling the human belly.*
 'An Irish harp hath the concave, or belly, at the end of the strings.'—Bacon,
Nat. Hist.

³ Phæd. viii.

⁴ Buckle. *To go; to hasten towards.*

'Soon he buckled to the field.'—Spenser.

⁵ Homer, *Il.* v. 845.

ANTITHETA ON DELAYS.

PRO.

'Fortuna multa festinanti vendit,
quibus morantem donat.

*'Fortune often SELLS to the hasty
what she GIVES to those who wait.'*

CONTRA.

'Occasio, instar Sibyllæ, minuit oblatum, pretium auget.

'Opportunity, like the Sibyl, diminishes her offering, and increases her price, at each visit.'

'Celeritas, Orci galea.

'Speed is the helmet of Pluto.'

ANNOTATIONS.

This matter of 'Delays' is most emphatically one in which, as Sir Roger de Coverley might have decided, much may be said on both sides. The rules which Bacon does give are very good; but, as it has been well observed, 'genius begins where rules end,' and there is no matter wherein rules can go a less way, or wherein there is more call for what may be called practical genius: that is, a far-sighted sagacity, as to the probable results of taking or not taking a certain step, and a delicate tact in judging of the peculiar circumstances of each case.

It is important to keep in mind, that in some cases, where (as Bacon has expressed it) 'not to decide is to decide,' a delay may amount to a wrong decision; and in other cases may at least produce serious evil. Thus, there was once a very learned and acute Lord Chancellor, none of whose decisions, I believe, were ever reversed, but who very often decided, virtually, *against both* parties, by delaying his decision till both were beggared by law-expenses, and broken down in mind and body by anxious care. And he delayed filling up Livings for two or three years, or more, to the great detriment of the parish, and sometimes with heavy loss of the revenue of the benefice.

The greater part of men are bigots to one or the other of the opposite systems,—of delay, or of expedition; always for acting either on the maxim of 'never put off till to-morrow what can be done to-day,' or, on the opposite one, which is said to have been in the mouth of Talleyrand, 'never do to-day what can be done to-morrow.'

But still worse are those mock-wise men who mingle the two systems together, and are slow and quick just in the same degree that a really wise man is ; only, in the wrong places : who make their decisions hastily, and are slow in the execution ; begin in a hurry, and are dilatory in proceeding ; who unmask their battery hastily, and then think of loading their guns ; who cut their corn green, (according to the French proverbial expression of ‘ *manger son blé en herbe,*’) and let their fruit hang to ripen till it has been blown down by the winds and is rotting on the ground.

‘ *The ripeness or unripeness of the occasion must ever be well weighed.*’

It is a common phrase with the indiscriminating advocates of delay, that ‘ *The World is not yet ripe for such and such a measure.*’ But they usually forget to inquire ‘ *Is it ripening?*’ When, and how, is it likely to *become* ripe ? or, Are men’s minds to ripen like winter pears, merely by laying them by, and letting them alone ?

‘ *Time,*’ as Bishop Copleston has remarked, (*Remains*, p. 123,) ‘ *is no agent.*’ When we speak of such and such changes being brought about *by* time, we mean *in* time,—by the gradual and imperceptible operation of some gentle agency. We should observe, therefore, whether there is any such agency at work, and in what direction ;—whether to render a certain change more difficult or easier. If you are surrounded by the waters, and want to escape, you should observe whether the tide is flowing or ebbing. In the one case, you should at once attempt the ford, at all hazards ; in the other, you have to wait patiently. And if the water be still, and neither rising nor falling, then you should consider that though there is no danger of drowning, you must remain insulated for ever, unless you cross the ford ; and that if this is to be done at all, it may be as well done at once.

The case of slavery in the United States is one of a rising tide. The rapid multiplication of slaves which has already rendered their emancipation a difficult and hazardous step, makes it more so every year, and increases the danger of a servile war such as that of St. Domingo.

The serfdom of the Russians is, perhaps, rather a case of

still water. There seems no great reason to expect that the state of things will grow either worse or better, spontaneously.¹

In each of these cases, the slaves and the serfs are not ripe for freedom; no *enslaved people ever are*; and to wait before you bestow liberty, or political rights, till the recipients are fit to employ them aright, is to resolve not to go into the water till you can swim. You *must* make up your mind to encounter many very considerable evils, at first, and for some time, while men are learning to use the advantages conferred on them.

It is the part of wisdom, however, to lessen these evils as far as can be done by careful *preparation*, and by bringing forward the several portions of any measure in the best *order*. A striking instance of the wisdom of this rule was exhibited in the measures adopted in reference to the Irish Roman-catholics. The first thing done was to bestow political power on the lowest, most ignorant, and most priest-ridden of the people, by giving them the elective franchise; at the same time making this a source of continual irritation and continued agitation, because they were still restricted from electing members of their own persuasion. Roman-catholics were still precluded from sitting in Parliament, because, forsooth, 'no one of that Church could be safely *trusted with political power*!' So said thousands, and hundreds of thousands, for nearly forty years, during which Roman-catholics *had* been exercising political power (as freeholders) in the most dangerous way possible. The next step was to admit Roman-catholics to seats; which ought to have preceded—as almost every one now admits—the conferring of the elective franchise; because the Roman-catholics who would thus have been admitted to a share of political power would have been few, and would have belonged to the educated classes. And last of all came that which should have been the first of all,—the providing of some such schooling for the mass of the people as might render them at least one degree less unfit for political power.

And, was the long interval between the beginning and the end of this series of measures, occupied in providing against the dangers to be apprehended as resulting? Quite the reverse. Instead of holding out, so as to gain better terms, we held out for worse. The ministry of 1806 provided certain conditions as

¹ Since this was written, there seems good hope of a remedy of this evil.

safeguards, which that of 1829 would not venture to insist on. The one ministry would have capitulated on terms; the other surrendered nearly at discretion. The one proposed to confer something of a free-will boon; the other yielded avowedly to intimidation.

In the *Heart of Midlothian* there is an amusing scene, where Jeanie, having discovered that the young ruffian, 'the Whistler,' is her nephew, goes to visit him in the outhouse where he is confined, bound hand and foot. She *first unbinds* him; and then proceeds to propose *conditions* of release; saying 'I will not let you out unless you will promise——' 'But I'll make you let me out:' and with that he snatches up the candle and sets fire to the hovel. She runs out screaming; and he escapes.

This may serve as a kind of type of the conduct of those who first grant men enough power to make their demand irresistible, and then afterwards think about limitations, and stipulations, and oaths, and suchlike securities.

In reference to the unfitness for freedom (just above alluded to) of those who have been enslaved, there is a just and important remark in a little pamphlet by Bishop Hinds, published several years ago (under the title of a *Letter to Lord Brougham*):—that the person who has the best opportunity both of *judging* of any Slave's fitness for liberty, and of *training* him to that fitness, is, the Master;—the very person whose apparent interest is *to keep* him a slave. The problem is, to make the Master's *interest* lie the other way. And the proposed solution, which is both ingenious and simple, is, a *tax* on Slaves;—an *ad valorem* tax, of so much per cent. on the value of each slave, as estimated by the master; who, however, is to be bound to *part* with the Slave to Government, if required, at the price fixed by himself; which rule would prevent him from fixing it too low. The slaves would thus be a *burden* to the master; and the most so, the most valuable; that is, the most intelligent, industrious, and trusty; who are those most qualified for liberty. These therefore he would be induced to free speedily; and the rest, as soon as each could be trained to such habits as would qualify him to be a free labourer. And thus Slavery would gradually melt away, without any dangerous revolution.

'There is no secrecy comparable to celerity.'

We have an illustration of the importance of 'celerity in the execution,' in circumstances in the history of our government of a later date than the instance above mentioned. A ministry which had established a certain system about which there had been much controversy, was succeeded by those of the opposite party; and these were eagerly looked to, by men of all parties, to see whether they would support that system in its integrity, or abolish, or materially modify it. They were warned of the importance of coming to a *speedy* decision one way or the other, and of clearly proclaiming it at once, in order to put a stop to false hopes and false fears. And it was pointed out to them that those who had hitherto opposed that system were now, *avowedly*, resting on their oars, and waiting to see what course the ministers they favoured would adopt. This warning was conveyed in a letter, pressing for a speedy answer: the answer came in a *year and a half!* and after every encouragement had been given, during the interim of hesitation, to the opponents of the system to come forward to *commit themselves anew* to their opposition (which they did), then at length the system was adopted and approved, and carried on in the face of these marshalled opponents, embittered by disappointment, and indignant at what they regarded as betrayal!

So much for taking one's time, and proceeding leisurely!

In another case, a measure of great benefit to the empire was proposed, which was approved by almost all sensible and public-spirited men acquainted with the case, but unacceptable to those who wished to 'fish in troubled waters,' and had sagacity enough to perceive the tendency of the measure,—and also by some few whose private interest was opposed to that of the Public, and by several others who were either misled by the above, or afraid of losing popularity with them. The wise course would have been, to make the exact arrangements, secretly, for all the details, and then at once to bring forward the measure; which would at once, and with ease, have been carried. Instead of this, the design was announced publicly, long before, so as to afford ample time and opportunity for getting up petitions, and otherwise organizing opposition; and then advantage was taken of some flaw in the details of the measure, which had been overlooked, and might easily have been remedied: and thus the measure was defeated.

It was as if a general should proclaim a month beforehand the direction in which he meant to march, so as to allow the enemy to prepare all kinds of obstacles ; and then, when he had begun his march, to be forced to turn back, from having left his pontoons and his artillery behind !

‘To shoot off before the time, or to teach dangers to come on by over-early buckling towards them, is another extreme.’

This error of taking some step prematurely, or of doing at one stride what had better have been done gradually, arises often, in a sensible man, from a sense of the shortness and uncertainty of life, and an impatience to ‘see of the labour of his soul and be satisfied,’ instead of leaving his designs to be carried into execution, or to be *completed*, by others, who may perhaps not do the work so well, or may be defeated by some rally of opponents.

And sometimes it is even wise, under the circumstances, to proceed more hastily than would have been advisable if one could have been sure of being able to proceed without obstacles. It would have been, for instance, *in itself*, better to relax gradually the laws interfering with free-trade, than to sweep them away at once. But the interval would have been occupied in endeavours, which might have been successful, to effect a kind of counter-revolution, and re-establish those laws. And so it is with many other reforms.

A man who plainly perceives that, as Bacon observes, there are some cases which call for promptitude, and others which require delay, and who has also sagacity enough to perceive *which* is which, will often be mortified at perceiving that he has come too late for some things, and too soon for others ;—that he is like a skilful engineer, who perceives how he could, fifty years earlier, have effectually preserved an important harbour which is now irrecoverably silted up, and how he could, fifty years hence, though not at present, reclaim from the sea thousands of acres of fertile land at the delta of some river.

Hence the proverb—

‘He that is truly wise and great,
Lives both too early and too late.’¹

¹ See *Proverbs and Precepts for Copy-pieces for Schools*.

ESSAY XXII. OF CUNNING.

WE take cunning for a sinister, or crooked wisdom; and certainly there is a great difference between a cunning man and a wise man, not only in point of honesty, but in point of ability. There be that can pack the cards, and yet cannot play well; so there are some that are good in canvasses and factions, that are otherwise weak men. Again, it is one thing to understand persons, and another thing to understand matters; for many are perfect in men's humours, that are not greatly capable of the real part of business; which is the constitution of one that hath studied men more than books. Such men are fitter for practice than for counsel, and they are good but in their own alley: turn them to new men, and they have lost their aim; so as¹ the old rule, to know a fool from a wise man, 'Mitte ambos nudos ad ignotos, et videbis,'² doth scarce hold for them. And because these cunning men are like haberdashers of small wares, it is not amiss to set forth their shop.

It is a point of cunning to wait³ upon him with whom you speak, with your eye, as the Jesuits give it in precept—for there be many wise men that have secret hearts and transparent countenances; yet this would⁴ be done with a demure abasing of your eye sometimes, as the Jesuits also do use.

Another is, that when you have anything to obtain of present dispatch, you entertain and amuse the party with whom you deal with some other discourse, that he be not too much awake to make objections. I know a counsellor and secretary, that never came to Queen Elizabeth of England with bills to sign, but he would always first put her into some discourse of state, that she might the less mind the bills.

The like surprise may be made by moving⁵ things when the

¹ As. *That*. See page 26.

² 'Send both naked to strangers, and thou shalt know.'

³ Wait upon him with your eye. *To look watchfully to him*. 'As the eyes of servants look unto the hands of their masters, . . . so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God.'—*Ps. cxxiii. 2*.

⁴ Would. *Should*.

⁵ Move. *To propose*.

'Let me but move one question to your daughter.'—*Shakespeare*.

party is in haste, and cannot stay to consider advisedly of that¹ is moved.

If a man would cross a business that he doubts some other would handsomely and effectually move, let him pretend to wish it well, and move it himself, in such sort as may foil it.

The breaking off in the midst of that one was about to say, as if he took himself up, breeds a greater appetite in him with whom you confer to know more.

And because it works better when anything seemeth to be gotten from you by question, than if you offer it of yourself, you may lay a bait for a question, by showing another visage and countenance than you are wont; to the end, to give occasion for the party to ask what the matter² is of the change, as Nehemiah did,—‘And I had not before that time been sad before the king.’³

In things that are tender and unpleasing, it is good to break the ice by some whose words are of less weight, and to reserve the more weighty voice to come in as by chance, so that he may be asked the question upon the other’s speech; as Narcissus did, in relating to Claudius the marriage of Messalina and Silius.⁴

In things that a man would not be seen in himself, it is a point of cunning to borrow the name of the world; as to say, ‘The world says,’ or, ‘There is a speech abroad.’

I knew one that, when he wrote a letter, he would put that which was most material in the postscript, as if it had been a bye matter.

I knew another that, when he came to have speech, he would pass over that he intended most, and go forth, and come back again, and speak of it as a thing he had almost forgot.

Some procure themselves to be surprised at such times as it is like the party, that they work upon, will suddenly come upon them, and be found with a letter in their hand, or doing somewhat which they are not accustomed, to the end they may

¹ That. *That which.* See page 82.

² Matter. *Cause.*

‘To your quick-conceiving discontent,
I’ll read you *matter* deep and dangerous.’—*Shakespeare.*

³ *Nehemiah* ii. 1.

⁴ *Tacit. Ann.* xi. 29, *seq.*

be apposed¹ of those things which of themselves they are desirous to utter.

It is a point of cunning to let fall those words in a man's own name which he would have another man learn and use, and thereupon take advantage. I knew two that were competitors for the secretary's place, in Queen Elizabeth's time, and yet kept good quarter² between themselves, and would confer one with another upon the business; and the one of them said, that to be a secretary in the declination³ of a monarchy was a ticklish thing, and that he did not affect⁴ it; the other straight caught up those words, and discoursed with divers⁵ of his friends, that he had no reason to desire to be secretary in the declining of a monarchy. The first man took hold of it, and found means it was told the queen; who, hearing of a declination of monarchy, took it so ill, as⁶ she would never after hear of the other's suit.

There is a cunning, which we in England call 'the turning of the cat in the pan;' which is, when that which a man says to another, he lays it as if another had said it to him; and, to say truth, it is not easy, when such a matter passed between two, to make it appear from which of them it first moved and began.

It is a way that some men have, to glance and dart at others by justifying themselves by negatives; as to say, 'This I do not;' as Tigellinus did towards Burrhus, saying, 'Se non

¹ Apposed. *Questioned*. (From *appono*, Lat.) 'Whiles children of that age were playing in the streets, Christ was found sitting in the Temple, not to gaze on the outward glory of the house, or on the golden candlesticks, or tables, but to hear and *oppose* the doctors.'—*Bishop Hall*.

(The office of 'Foreign *Apposer*' exists to this day in the Court of Exchequer.)

² Quarter. *Amity; concord*.

'Friends, all but now,
In *quarter*.'—*Shakespeare*.

³ Declination. *Decay*.

'Hope waits upon the flow'ry prime;
And summer though it be less gay,
Yet is not look'd on as a time
Of *declination* or decay.'—*Waller*.

⁴ Affect. *Aim at; endeavour after*. See page 1.

⁵ Divers. *Several; more than one*. 'Divers friends thought it strange.'—*Boyle*.

⁶ As. *That*. See page 26.

⁷ Cat' in the pan. *Pan-cake*. (Cate—cake—pan-cake.) Usually turned by a dexterous toss of the cook. A pan-cake is, in Northamptonshire, still called a *pan-cate*.

diversas spes, sed incolumitatem imperatoris simpliciter spectare.¹

Some have in readiness so many tales and stories, as there is nothing they would insinuate but they can wrap it into a tale; which serveth both to keep themselves more in² guard, and to make others carry it with more pleasure.

It is a good point of cunning for a man to shape the answer he would have, in his own words and propositions; for it makes the other party stick³ the less.

It is strange how long some men will lie in wait to speak somewhat they desire to say, and how far about they will fetch, and how many other matters they will beat over to come near it; it is a thing of great patience, but yet of much use.

A sudden, bold, and unexpected question, doth many times surprise a man, and lay him open. Like to him that, having changed his name, and walking in Paul's, another suddenly came behind him, and called him by his true name, whereat straightways⁴ he looked back.

But these small wares and petty points of cunning are infinite, and it were a good deed to make a list of them; for that nothing doth more hurt in a State than that cunning men pass for wise.

But certainly some there are that know the resorts⁵ and falls⁶ of business, that cannot sink into the main of it; like a house that hath convenient stairs and entries, but never a fair room: therefore you shall see them find out pretty⁷ looses⁸ in the con-

¹ 'He did not look to various hopes, but solely to the safety of the emperor.'—Tacit. *Ann.* xiv. 57.

² In. On. 'Let fowl multiply in the earth.'—*Genesis* i.

³ Stick. *To hesitate; to scruple.* 'Rather than impute our miscarriages to our own corruption, we do not *stick* to arraign Providence.'—*South.*

⁴ Straightways. *Immediately.*

⁵ Resorts. *Springs.*

'Fortune,

Whose dark *resorts* since prudence cannot know,
In vain it would provide for what shall be.'—*Dryden.*

⁶ Falls. *Chances.* 'To resist the *falls* of fortune.'—*Golden Book.*

⁷ Pretty. *Suitable; fit; tolerable.*

'My daughter's of a *pretty* age.'—*Romeo and Juliet.*

⁸ Looses. *Issues; escapes from restraint, such as is difficulty or perplexity in deliberation.*

'And shot they with the square, the round, or forket pile, (head of an arrow)
The *loose* gave such a twang as might be heard a mile.'—*Drayton.*

clusion,¹ but are no ways able to examine or debate matters ; and yet commonly they take advantage of their inability, and would be thought wits of direction. Some build rather upon the abusing² of others, and (as we now say) putting tricks upon them, than upon the soundness of their own proceedings ; but Solomon saith, ‘Prudens advertit ad gressus suos ; stultus divertit ad dolos.’³

ANNOTATIONS.

‘We take cunning for a sinister or crooked wisdom.’

Those who are for making *etymology* decisive as to the *actual* meaning of words⁴ might maintain that, as the word is derived from ‘ken’—i.e. ‘know,’—it is properly to be applied, now (as it was formerly), to all knowledge and skill.

And, again, a plausible disquisition might be written on human depravity ; the present use of the word being taken as a proof that all who possess knowledge are likely to make an ill-use of it. Such disquisitions may be met with, by writers who either do not understand, or trust to their readers not understanding, the principles on which languages are formed and modified, and who would fain pass for profound moral philosophers.⁵

But, in truth, it is quite natural, and very common, to use

This use of the word ‘loose’ seems to correspond with our use of the word ‘solution,’ from *solvo*, to LOOSE—‘Solve the question:’

‘He had red her riddle, which no wight
Could ever loose.’—*Spenser*.

¹ Conclusion. *The close ; the result of deliberation.* ‘I have been reasoning, and in *conclusion* have thought it best to return to what Fortune had made my home.’—*Swift*.

Bacon’s meaning in the use of the words taken together, ‘Pretty looses in the conclusion,’ is best explained by the original Latin of this Essay—‘*Tales videtis in conclusionibus deliberationum quosdam exitus reperire.*’

² Abuse. *To deceive.*

‘The Moor’s *abused* by some most villanous knave.’—*Shakespeare*.

³ ‘The wise man looks to his steps ; the fool turns aside to the snare.’

⁴ See ‘Annotations’ on Essay L.

⁵ See *English Synonyms*: Preface.

softened expressions in speaking of anything odious. Most of the words, accordingly, which now denote something offensive, were originally *euphemisms*, and gradually became appropriated to a bad sense. Thus (to take one example out of a multitude), '*wicked*' seems to have originally meant 'lively;' being formed from 'quick,' or 'wick,' *i.e.* *alive*. This latter is the word now in use in Cumberland for 'alive.' And hence the *live*—*i.e.* burning—part of a lamp or candle, is called the *wick*.

'Certainly there is a great difference between a cunning man and a wise man,—not only in point of honesty, but in point of ability.'

Whatever a man may be, intellectually, he labours under this disadvantage if he is of low moral principle, that he knows only the weak and bad parts of human nature, and not the better.

It was remarked by an intelligent Roman Catholic that the *Confessional* trains the priest to a knowledge not of human nature, but of mental *nosology*. 'It may therefore qualify them,' he said, 'for the treatment of a depraved, but not of a pure mind.'

Now, what the *Confessional* is to the priest, *that* a knave's own heart is to *him*. He can form no notion of a nobler nature than his own. He is like the goats in Robinson Crusoe's island, who saw clearly everything *below* them, but very imperfectly what was above them; so that Robinson Crusoe could never get at them from the valleys, but when he came upon them from the hill-top, took them quite by surprise.

Miss Edgeworth describes such a person as one who divides all mankind into rogues and fools, and when he meets with an honest man of good sense, does not know what to make of him. Nothing, it is said, more puzzled Buonaparte. He would offer a man *money*; if that failed, he would talk of *glory*, or promise him *rank and power*: but if all these temptations failed, he set him down for an idiot, or a half-mad dreamer. Conscience was a thing he could not understand. Other things, then, being equal, an honest man has this advantage over a knave, that he understands more of human nature: for he knows that *one* honest man exists; and concludes that there must be more; and

he also knows, if he is not a mere simpleton, that there are some who are knavish ; but the knave can seldom be brought to believe in the existence of an honest man. The honest man *may* be deceived in particular persons ; but the knave is *sure* to be deceived whenever he comes across an honest man who is not a mere fool.

There are some writers of fiction whose productions have lately (1854) obtained considerable reputation, who have given spirited and just representations of particular characters, but an unnatural picture of society as a whole, from omitting (what they appear to have no notion of) all characters of good sense combined with good principle. They seem to have formed no idea of any, but what one may call *ευηθεις* and *κακοηθεις* ; —simpletons and crafty knaves ; together with some who combine portions of each ; profligacy with silliness. But all their worthy people are represented as weak, and all those of superior intelligence as morally detestable. One of these writers was, in conversation, reprobating as unjust the censure passed on slavery, and maintaining that any ill-usage of a slave was as rare in America, as a hump-back or a club-foot among us ;—quite an exception. If so, the Americans must be a curious contrast to all that his fictions represent ; for, in them, *all* of superior intelligence, and most of those of no superior intelligence, are just the persons who would make the most tyrannical slave-masters ; being not only utterly unprincipled, but utterly hard-hearted, and strangers to all human feeling !

The sort of advantage which those of high moral principle possess, in the knowledge of mankind, is analogous to that which Man possesses over the brute. Man is an animal, as well as the brute ; but he is something more. He has, and therefore can understand, most of their appetites and propensities : but he has also faculties which they want, and of which they can form no notion. Even so, the bodily appetites, and the desire of gain, and other propensities, are common to the most elevated and the most degraded of mankind ; but the latter are deficient in the higher qualifications which the others possess ; and can, accordingly, so little understand them, that, as Bacon remarks, ‘ of the highest virtues, the vulgar have no perception.’ (Supremarum sensus nullus.)

‘These small wares and petty points of cunning are infinite. . . .’

To these small wares, enumerated by Bacon, might be added a very hackneyed trick, which yet is wonderfully successful,—to affect a delicacy about mentioning particulars, and hint at what you *could* bring forward, only you do not wish to give offence. ‘We could give many cases to prove that such and such a medical system is all a delusion, and a piece of quackery; but we abstain, through tenderness for individuals, from bringing names before the Public.’ ‘I have observed many things—which, however, I will not particularize—which convince me that Mr. Such-a-one is unfit for his office; and others have made the same remark; but I do not like to bring them forward,’ &c. &c.

Thus an unarmed man keeps the unthinking in awe, by assuring them that he has a pair of loaded pistols in his pocket, though he is loth to produce them.

To deal in obscure *hints*, boastfully put forward, is a stratagem analogous to that by which the famous Montrose is recorded to have gained one of his victories, over very superior numbers. He placed almost all his men in the two wings; with nothing in the centre but some thickets among which a very few men were dispersed, who were to show themselves here and there amidst the bushes, so as to give the impression of a concealed force, which the enemy did not venture to attack.

The following trick is supposed (for no certain knowledge could be, or ever can be, obtained) to have been successfully practised in a transaction which occurred in the memory of persons now living:—A person whose conduct was about to undergo an investigation which it could not well stand, communicated to one who was likely to be called on as a witness, all the details—a complete fabrication—of some atrocious misconduct: and when the witness narrated the conversation, utterly denied the whole, and easily proved that the things described could not possibly have occurred. The result was, a universal acquittal, and a belief that *all* the accusations were the result of an atrocious conspiracy. But those who best knew the characters of the parties, were convinced that the witness had

spoken nothing but the truth as to the alleged conversation, and had been tricked by the accused party, who had invented a false accusation in order to defeat a true one.

One not very uncommon device of some cunning people is an *affectation* of *extreme* simplicity; which often has the effect, for the time at least, of throwing the company off their guard. And their plan is to affect a hasty, blunt, and what the French call 'brusque' manner. The simple are apt to conclude that he who is not smooth and cautious, must be honest, and what they call 'a rough diamond;' in reality, a rough diamond—all but the diamond. Thus Hastings says of Richard III. :—

'I think there's ne'er a man in Christendom
Can lesser hide his love or hate than he;
For by his face straight you shall know his heart.'

Another device is, an affectation of extreme modesty. It is a well-known and common art of the orator to extol the ingenuity and eloquence of an opponent, that the effect of what he says may be attributed rather to his ability than to the strength of his cause, and that the hearers may even be led to feel a distrust and dread of him. We commonly find a barrister—especially when he has a weak cause—complimenting his 'learned brother' on the skill with which he has pleaded.

But in other cases besides those of public orations, an excessive distrust of superior ability is a kind of fallacy by which weak men often mislead themselves, and cunning ones seek to mislead others. When you have offered strong and unanswerable reasons in favour of some conclusion, or some line of conduct, a person of exquisite modest humility will perhaps reply, 'Of course I am not so presumptuous as to attempt to argue with *you*; I know well your superior ability and learning; I have no doubt you could easily defeat me in any discussion; but you must allow me to retain my own opinion.'

Thus, if you are supposed to be an able reasoner, all the reasons you can offer are, on that ground, to go for nothing! The *discount* at which all you can say is to be taken, amounts to a hundred per cent. or more. You must submit to what is called in Chess a *stale-mate*.

Sometimes indeed, even when there is no matter in immediate dispute, a man of reputed ability will be altogether

shunned by some persons, just as cautious people (according to Dean Swift's illustration) keep out of the way of a gun, which *may* go off, they know not how, and do mischief.

A late eminent writer once sought the acquaintance of a clergyman who was a very near neighbour, merely as such, and not with a view to any controversial discussion; and the other declined all intercourse; alleging that he was fully convinced his neighbour was heretical, but so far his superior in learning and ability that he could not presume to engage in any discussion with him, and was afraid of some impression being made on himself. This is exactly the ground on which the Emperor Charles V.¹ always refused a hearing to the Lutheran divines.

And in another instance, a man refused, to the end of his life, to hold any intercourse with one nearly connected with him, as 'believing him to be a man who could *prove anything*.' He did not allege any abuse of this supposed power; but took for granted that whoever has the power to do evil will be sure to use it.

Thucydides records (B. 8) the prejudice entertained by the Athenians against one of their most eminent citizens, Antiphon, to whom they were unwilling to allow a hearing, because they had so high an opinion of his abilities that they thought him likely to make a skilful defence. And so they paid him the undesirable compliment of condemning him unheard.

Of course, if we have any good reason for suspecting a man's uprightness, or candour, we should be the more on our guard against him in proportion to his ability. And, universally, it would be rash for the unlearned to take for granted that they are bound to yield at once to every argument and objection urged by a learned and skilful controversialist, unless they can find an immediate answer. They should take time to consider, and should seek some champion on the opposite side, able to supply their deficiency. But it surely cannot be right that any one should be altogether denied a hearing, merely on the ground of his possessing superior intelligence. It is, no doubt, a compendious mode of getting rid of strong and unanswerable reasons, to make them *go for nothing*, merely because urged by

¹ See an able article on his life in the *Edinburgh Review*, Jan. 1855.

an able man. But this spurious modesty is, in truth, a fallacy by which (as has been above said) the weak impose on themselves, and the crafty, on others.

All *Fallacies* are pieces of cunning, when used designedly. For by a fallacy is commonly understood any unsound mode of arguing, which appears to demand our conviction, and to be decisive of the question in hand, when in fairness it is not. And many are the contrivances which the sophist, who brings forward the fallacy, deliberately uses to withdraw our attention (his art closely resembling the juggler's) from the quarter where it lies.¹

Much ingenious artifice is often used to evade the *odium* of urging a man to do something you wish him to do, or of dissuading, or preventing him from doing what you wish him not to do, or of refusing to grant something you are asked for, &c.

The story, which has become proverbial, of 'pray don't nail his ears to the pump,' is a type of one class of these manœuvres; where you suggest something, or hold out a temptation, under the pretext of dissuading.

When an illustrious personage was doubting about coming to England, being offered by government an ample pension for staying abroad, and threatened with a trial (in case of refusal) for alleged misconduct, one of the advisers of the party, wishing for troubled waters, in hopes of catching some fish, said, 'I entreat and implore you to accept the offer, if you are at all conscious that any of the accusations against you are well-founded. By all means stay abroad, unless you are *quite* sure of being able to establish your innocence.' This, of course, produced the effect he designed; since it made a consent to remain absent amount to a confession of guilt.

Again, the granting of some permission, coupled with some

¹ See *Elements of Logic*, b. iii., 'On Fallacies.'

It may be as well to mention here that one of the Fallacies there treated of (§ 18, last paragraph) having lately been—much to my surprise—brought forward and elaborately defended, I have thought it needful to print a short postscript, giving a somewhat fuller description of it than I had before thought necessary.

The Fallacy in question consists in confounding together two different questions; (1) 'Whether a certain conclusion is established by *this particular argument*; and (2) 'Whether the conclusion is *true*.' The subject is more fully discussed in the Articles on 'Cumulative Evidence' in the *United Church Journal* for August and for October, 1856; and also in my edition of *Paley's Evidences*.

condition which you know cannot or will not be fulfilled, is practically a prohibition.

It is said that a gentleman, who was desirous to distribute Bibles among his poor neighbours, found them willing and desirous to receive them, if permitted by their clergy. He accordingly applied to their bishop; who applauded his liberality, and expressed his hearty concurrence; only requiring that each person should come and ask his permission, which he promised never to refuse, except for some special reason. The gentleman, however, found, to his surprise, that no one of his poor neighbours went to ask this permission. At length he was told the cause; viz., that if any man of humble station waits on the bishop, it is understood that this is to obtain *absolution* for some heinous sin, beyond what the *priest* has power to pardon; and thus his character is for ever blasted. Thus the bishop was enabled to say that he had *never refused* any man permission to obtain a Bible!

Again, a gentleman residing in Brittany, wished, it is said, to distribute Bibles among the people, and found he had to apply to the Authorities for a licence, which the law of France requires, in order to prevent the hawking of seditious publications. The official applied to did not like broadly to refuse, but granted a licence for the distribution of *French* Bibles; which are quite unintelligible to the poor Bretons. What was wanted was, of course, a licence to distribute Bibles *in their own tongue*, which is a dialect of Welsh. But this could not be obtained. He had granted a licence for the sale of Bibles, and that was enough!¹

Even so the stork in the fable was welcome to as much soup as she could pick up with her bill, and the wolf to as much mince-meat as he could get out of a narrow-necked bottle. And according to the proverbial caution 'You should never rub your eye except with your elbow.'

Again, a person who had the control of a certain public hall, was asked for the use of it for a meeting of a society established in express opposition to an Institution he was connected with. He might, on that ground, very fairly have refused permission, or have frankly retracted it, on consideration, if hastily and

¹ I do not vouch for the correctness of the above two anecdotes, but merely for having heard them, and having no reason to think them improbable.

inconsiderately granted. But he readily granted the use of the hall ; and then afterwards inserted the condition that none of the speakers were to say anything *against his* institution ; and as this was, of course, the principal topic designed to be dwelt on, the condition was refused, and the permission withdrawn. He could no more go *straight* to any object, than a hare in going from her form to her pasture.

A skilful sophist will avoid a *direct* assertion of what he means unduly to assume ; because that might direct the reader's attention to the consideration of the question, whether it be *true* or not ; since that which is indisputable does not need so often to be asserted. It succeeds better, therefore, to *allude* to the proposition, as something *curious* and remarkable : just as the Royal Society were imposed on by being asked to *account for* the fact that a vessel of water received no addition to its weight by a live fish being put into it. While they were seeking for the *cause*, they forgot to ascertain the fact ; and thus admitted, without suspicion, a mere fiction. So also, an eminent Scotch writer, instead of *asserting* that ' the advocates of logic have been worsted and driven from the field in every controversy ' (an assertion which, if made, would have been the more readily ascertained to be perfectly groundless), merely *observes*, that ' it is a circumstance not a little *remarkable*.'

' There be that can pack the cards, and yet cannot play well.'

Those whom Bacon here so well describes, are men of a clear and quick sight, but short-sighted. They are ingenious in particulars, but cannot take a comprehensive view of a whole. Such a man may make a good captain, but a bad general. He may be clever at surprising a piquet, but would fail in the management of a great army and the conduct of a campaign. He is like a chess-player who takes several pawns, but is checkmated.

One who is clever, but not wise—skilful in the details of any transaction, but erroneous in his whole system of conduct—resembles a clock whose *minute-hand* is in good order, but the *hour-hand* loose ; so that while it measures accurately small portions of time, it is, on the whole, perhaps several hours wrong.

Goldsmith introduces, in *The Vicar of Wakefield*, a clever rogue, despising a plain straightforward farmer, whom he generally contrives to cheat once a year; yet he confesses that, in spite of this, the farmer went on thriving, while *he* was always poor.

Indeed, it is a remarkable circumstance in reference to cunning persons, that they are often deficient, not only in comprehensive far-sighted wisdom, but even in prudent, cautious circumspection.

There was a man of this description, who delighted in taking in every one he had to deal with, and was most ingenious and successful in doing so. And yet his own estate, which was a very large one, he managed very ill; and he bequeathed it absolutely to his *widow*, whom he might have known to be in understanding a mere child, and who accordingly became the prey of fortune-hunters.

Numerous are the cases in which the cunning are grossly taken in by the cunning. Liars are often credulous.

Many travellers have given curious accounts of the subtilty of the North American Indians, in stealing upon their enemies so as to take them by surprise : how they creep silently through the bushes, and carefully cover up their footmarks, &c. But these writers take no notice of the most curious circumstance of all, which is, that the enemies they thus surprise are usually Indians of the same race—men accustomed to practise just the same arts themselves. The ingenuity and caution of these people is called forth, and admirably displayed, on the occasion of their setting out on a warlike expedition ; but they have no *settled habit* of even ordinary prudence. When not roused to the exertion of their faculties by some pressing emergency, they are thoughtless and careless, and liable to be surprised, in their turn. To fortify their villages, so as to make a surprise impossible, or to keep up a regular patrol of sentries to watch for the approach of an enemy, has never occurred to them ! A savage is often a cunning, but never a wise, or even a prudent Being. And even so, among us, many who are skilful in playing tricks on others are often tricked themselves.

Sometimes, indeed, the more crafty of two knaves will take in the other by *calculating* on his knavery, and thus knowing how to bait his hook. For instance, there is a story told of

a merchant who applied to the Agent of an insurance-office to effect a Pollicy¹ on a ship. Immediately after, he heard of the loss of his ship; and suspecting that perhaps (as was the fact) the insurance might be not completed, he wrote off to the Agent desiring him *not to proceed* with the business, for that '*he had heard of that ship.*' The Agent, taking for granted that he had heard of its *safety*, hurried to the office, completed the business, and then wrote to the merchant by return of post, expressing his concern that the countermand had arrived a few hours too late, and that the insurance had been effected. Thus the merchant obtained his payment, because he could prove that he had written to *forbid* the insurance.

One may be allowed to exult in the defeat of a crafty man who has outwitted himself, and fallen 'into the pit that he digged for others.' The following is an anecdote which I have heard, though I do not pledge myself for its truth. A curate of a London parish, of most exemplary conduct, was accustomed to remonstrate very freely with any of his People whose life was not what it should have been. They wished much to get rid of him, but could find no pretext for complaint either to the Rector or the Bishop. They therefore hit upon this cunning plan: they drew up and signed, a Memorial to the Bishop, setting forth the admirable character of the Curate, lamenting that his eminent worth should not be rewarded, and earnestly recommending him for preferment. Soon after, *this very living*, quite unexpectedly became vacant: whereupon the Bishop considering how acceptable as well as deserving he appeared to be, presented him to it, informing him of the Memorial. The good man thanked his People with tearful eyes, rejoicing that they had taken in good part his freedom of speech, and assuring them that he would continue all his life the course which had won their approbation.

In a Tale of Crabbe's (founded on a fact) which is published in his posthumous Works, the case is described of a worthless spendthrift who disinherited himself, by burning his father's Will to avoid the payment of a legacy. He expected to inherit as heir-at-law; but by his act he gave validity to a former Will which left all the property to another.

¹ This is the right spelling of the word; which is evidently a contraction of *pollicitum*, a promise, and has no connexion with politics.

It may be added that the cunning are often deceived by those who have no such intention. When a plain, straightforward man declares plainly his real motives or designs, they set themselves to guess what these are, and hit on every possible solution but the right; taking for granted that he cannot mean what he says. Bacon's remark on this we have already given in the 'Antitheta on Simulation and Dissimulation.' 'He who acts in all things openly, does not deceive the less; for most persons either do not understand, or do not believe him.'

'Nothing doth more hurt in a State than that cunning men pass for wise.'

Churchill thus describes the cunning man:—

'With that low cunning which in fools supplies,
And amply too, the place of being wise,
Which nature, kind, indulgent parent, gave
To qualify the blockhead for a knave;
With that smooth falsehood whose appearance charms,
And Reason of its wholesome doubt disarms,
Which to the lowest depths of guile descends,
By vilest means pursues the vilest ends;
Wears friendship's mask for purposes of spite,
Fawns in the day, and butchers in the night.'¹

It is indeed an unfortunate thing for the Public that the cunning pass for wise,—that those whom Bacon compares to 'a house with convenient stairs and entry, but never a fair room' should be the men who (accordingly) are the most likely to rise to high office. The art of *gaining* power, and that of *using* it well, are too often found in different persons.

¹ *The Rosciad*, l. 117.

ESSAY XXIII. OF WISDOM FOR A MAN'S SELF.

AN ant is a wise creature for itself, but it is a shrewd¹ thing in an orchard or garden; and certainly men that are great lovers of themselves waste² the public. Divide with reason between self-love and society; and be so true to thyself as thou be not false to others, especially to thy king and country. It is a poor centre of a man's actions, himself. It is right earth; for that only stands fast upon his own centre; whereas all things that have affinity with the heavens move upon the centre of another, which they benefit. The referring of all to a man's self is more tolerable in a sovereign prince, because themselves are not only themselves, but their good and evil is at the peril of the public fortune: but it is a desperate evil in a servant to a prince, or a citizen in a republic; for whatsoever affairs pass such a man's hands, he crooketh³ them to his own ends, which must needs be often eccentric to the ends of his master or State: therefore, let princes or States chuse such servants as have not this mark, except they mean their service should be made but the accessary. That which maketh the effect more pernicious is, that all proportion is lost. It were disproportion enough for the servant's good to be preferred before the master's; but yet it is a greater extreme, when a little good of the servant shall carry things against the great good of the master's: and yet that is the case of bad officers, treasurers, ambassadors, generals, and other false and corrupt servants, which set a bias⁴ upon their bowl, of their own petty ends and

¹ Shrewd. *Mischievous.*

‘Do my Lord of Canterbury
A shrewd turn, and he is your friend for ever.’—*Shakespeare.*

² Waste. *To lay waste; to desolate.*

‘Peace to corrupt, no less than war to waste.’—*Milton.*

³ Crook. *To pervert.* ‘St. Augustine sayeth himself that images be of more force to crooke an unhappy soule than to teach and instruct him.’—*Homilies*—‘Sermon against Idolatry.’

⁴ Bias. *A weight lodged on one side of the bowl, which turns it from the straight line.*

‘Madam, we’ll play at bowls,—
’Twill make me think the world is full of rubs,
And that my fortune runs against the bias.’—*Shakespeare.*

envies, to the overthrow of their master's great and important affairs. And for the most part, the good such servants receive is after the model of their own fortune, but the hurt they sell for that good is after the model of their master's fortune. And certainly it is the nature of extreme self-lovers, as¹ they will set a house on fire and² it were but to roast their eggs; and yet these men many times hold credit with their masters, because their study is but to please them, and profit themselves; and for either respect³ they will abandon the good of their affairs.

Wisdom for a man's self is, in many branches thereof, a depraved thing: it is the wisdom of rats, that will be sure to leave a house some time before its fall: it is the wisdom of the fox, that thrusts out the badger, who digged and made room for him: it is the wisdom of crocodiles, that shed tears when they would devour. But that which is specially to be noted is, that those which (as Cicero says of Pompey) are 'sui amantes sine rivali'⁴ are many times unfortunate; and whereas they have all their time sacrificed to themselves, they become in the end themselves sacrifices to the inconstancy of fortune, whose wings they thought by their self-wisdom to have pinioned.

ANNOTATIONS.

'An ant is a shrewd thing in a garden.'

This was probably the established notion in Bacon's time, as it is with some, perhaps, now. People seeing plants in a sickly state covered with ants, attributed the mischief to them; the fact being that the ants do them neither harm nor good, but are occupied in sucking the secretion of the aphides which swarm on diseased plants, and are partly the cause, partly the effect of disease. If he had carefully watched the ants, he

¹ As. *That*. See page 26.

² And. *If*. '*An*' it like you.'—*Shakespeare*.

³ Respect. *Consideration*.

'There's the respect

That makes calamity of so long life.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁴ '*Lovers of themselves without a rival.*'—*Cic. ad Q. F.* III, 8.

would have seen them sucking the aphides, and the aphides sucking the plant.

But Bacon, though he had a great fancy for making observations and experiments in every branch of natural philosophy and natural history, was remarkably unskilful in that department. His observations were slight and inaccurate, and his reasonings from them very rash. It is true we ought not to measure a man of those days by the standard of the present, when science has—partly through Bacon's means—made such advances. But he was below (in this point) what might have been attained, and was attained, in his own day. Copernicus' theory was not unknown in his day; yet he seems to have thought lightly of it. Also Gilbert the Magnetist he did not duly appreciate. And most remarkable of all, perhaps, is his error—noticed in the preface—respecting the Misselto; a trifling matter in itself; but the casting up of a sum is a test of one's arithmetic, whether the items be farthings or pounds.

Unlike Bacon, Socrates greatly discouraged all branches of natural philosophy. According to Xenophon, he derided those who inquired concerning the motions of the heavenly bodies, the tides, the atmosphere, &c., asking whether they expected to be able to *control* these things? or whether, again, they had so completely mastered all that related to human affairs, of which Man does possess the control, that they might afford to devote themselves to speculations remote from practice?

That nature *can* be controlled, by obeying (and only by obeying) her laws ('Naturæ non imperatur, nisi parendo'), the maxim which Bacon so earnestly dwells on, and which furnishes the proper answer—though well worthy of that earnestness,—is what all mankind—even savages—have always in some degree acted on. For he who sows his corn at the season when he has *observed* that fertilizing rains may be expected, and so that by the time it approaches maturity the season of sunshine may be expected, does virtually command rain and sun. And the mariner commands the winds and tides, who so times his voyage, from observation, as to be likely to meet with favourable winds and tides. And so in an infinite number of other cases.

'Divide with reason' between self-love and society; and be so true to thyself as thou be not false to others.'

The difference between *self-love* and *selfishness* has been well explained by Aristotle, though he has not accounted for the use of the word *φιλαυτία*. It is clear that selfishness exists only in reference to others, and could have no place in one who lived alone on a desert island, though he might have of course every degree of self-love; for selfishness is not an excess of self-love, and consists not in an over-desire of happiness, but in placing your happiness in something which interferes with, or leaves you regardless of, that of others.² Nor are we to suppose that selfishness and want of feeling are either the same or inseparable. For, on the one hand, I have known such as have had very little feeling, but felt for others as much nearly as for themselves, and were, therefore, far from selfish; and, on the other hand, some, of very acute feelings, feel for no one but themselves, and, indeed, are sometimes amongst the most cruel.

Under this head of the 'dividing between self-love and society' may be placed a distinction made by Bishop Copleston³ between two things which he says are occasionally confounded by Locke, as well as most other writers on education. 'Two things,' he remarks, 'ought to be kept perfectly distinct—viz., that mode of education which would be most beneficial, as a system, to *society* at large, with that which would contribute most to the advantage and prosperity of an *individual*. Now, the peculiar interest of the individual is not always the same, is seldom precisely the same, is even frequently at variance, with the interest of the Public. And he who serves the one most faithfully, always forgets, and often injures, the other. The latter is that alone which deserves the attention of a philosopher; the former—individual interest—is narrow, selfish, and mercenary. It is the mode of education which would fit for a specific employment, or contribute most to individual advantage and prosperity, on which the world are most eager to inform themselves; but the persons who instruct them, however they may deserve the thanks and esteem of those whom

¹ With reason. *Fairly*.

² See *Lessons on Morals*, L. xvi. § 3.

³ *Memoir of Bishop Copleston*, p. 307.

they benefit, do no service to mankind. There are but so many good places in the theatre of life; and he who puts us in the way of procuring one of them does to *us* indeed a great favour, but none to the whole assembly.' He adds a little after, 'A wide space is left to the discretion of the individual, where the claims of the community are either not pressing or wholly silent.'

Another point in which the advantage of the individual is quite distinct from that of the public, I have touched upon in a *Lecture on the Professions*,¹ from which I take the liberty of adding an extract. 'It is worth remarking that there is one point wherein some branches of the Law differ from others, and agree with some professions of a totally different class. *Superior ability and professional skill*, in a Judge, or a Conveyancer, are, if combined with integrity, a *public* benefit. They confer a service on certain individuals, *not at the expense of any others*: and the death or retirement of a man thus qualified, is a loss to the *community*. And the same may be said of a physician, a manufacturer, a navigator, &c., of extraordinary ability. A *pleader*, on the contrary, of powers far above the average, is not, *as such*, serviceable to the Public. He obtains wealth and credit for himself and his family; but any special advantage accruing from his superior ability, to those who chance to be his clients, is just so much loss to those he chances to be *opposed* to: and *which* party is, on each occasion, in the right, must be regarded as an even chance. His death, therefore, would be no loss to the Public; only, to those particular persons who might have benefited by his superior abilities, at their opponents' expense. It is not that advocates, generally, are not useful to the Public. They are even necessary. But *extraordinary* ability in an advocate, is an advantage only to himself and his friends. To the Public, the most desirable thing is, that pleaders should be as *equally matched* as possible; so that neither John Doe nor Richard Roe should have any advantage independent of the goodness of his cause.² Extraordinary

¹ Reprinted in the *Elements of Rhetoric*.

² On this it has been remarked by an intelligent writer, that, when there are *two* very superior pleaders in existence, the death of *one* of them would be a national loss. And this would hold good, if the two were always engaged on *opposite sides*. But that is so far from being necessarily, or usually, the case, that,

ability in an advocate may indeed raise him to great wealth, or to a seat on the bench, or in the senate; and he may use these advantages—as many illustrious examples show, greatly to the public benefit. But then, it is not *as* an advocate, directly, but as a rich man, as a judge, or as a senator, that he thus benefits his country.’

‘*Bad officers, treasurers, ambassadors, generals, and other false and corrupt servants, set a bias upon their bowl, of their own petty ends and envies, to the overthrow of their master’s great and important affairs.*’

It seems not to have occurred to Bacon that the mischief he so well describes could take place except from the selfish wisdom of persons *entrusted with some employment*, and sacrificing the interest of their *employer* to their own. But, in truth, the greatest amount of evils of this class—that is, the sacrifice of public good to individual profit,—has arisen from the favour claimed by, and shown to, certain classes of men, in no official situation, who have persuaded the nation (and, doubtless, sometimes themselves also), that their own interest was that of the State. Both the Spaniards and the English prohibited their colonies from trading with any but the mother-country; and also from manufacturing for themselves; though the colonists were fellow-citizens, and were virtually taxed for the profit, not of the State, but of certain manufacturers and merchants. For, if they had found the goods produced in the mother-country to be cheaper and better than they could make for themselves, or buy elsewhere, they would have supplied themselves with these of *their own accord*, without need of prohibiting laws; but whenever this was *not* the case—that is, whenever there was *any occasion* for such a law,—it is plain they were paying an *extra* price, or buying inferior articles, for the profit of the manufacturers at home. Yet this never seemed to strike even the Americans themselves, or their advocates, at the time when the revolt broke out. It was only avowed taxa-

on the contrary, it is a common practice for a party who has engaged a very eminent barrister to plead for him, to give also to another eminent barrister a retaining-fee (it might be called a *restraining-fee*), without expecting him to take any part in the pleading, but merely to prevent his being engaged by the opposite party.

tion for the benefit of the *government* at home (which *had* laid out something for them) that they complained of.

And this did not arise from comparative indifference to the welfare of our colonial fellow-subjects; for the like sort of policy has been long pursued at home. We imported timber of inferior quality from Canada, when better was to be had at a tenth part of the distance, lest saw-mills in Canada, and timber-ships engaged in that trade, should suffer a diminution of profit; though the total value of them all put together did not probably equal the *annual* loss sustained by the Public. And we prohibited the refining of sugar in the sugar colonies, and chose to import it in the most bulky and most perishable form, for the benefit of a few English sugar-bakers; whose total profits did not probably amount to as many shillings as the nation lost pounds.

And the land-owners maintained, till very lately, a monopoly against the bread-consumers, which amounted virtually to a tax on every loaf, for the sake of keeping up rents.

‘Other selfishness,’ (says Mr. Senior, in his *Lectures on Political Economy*,) ‘may be as intense, but none is so unblushing, because none so much tolerated, as that of a monopolist claiming a *vested interest* in a public injury.’ But, doubtless, many of these claimants persuaded *themselves*, as well as the nation, that they were promoting the *public* good.

ESSAY XXIV. OF INNOVATIONS.

AS the births of living creatures at first are ill-shapen, so are all innovations, which are the births of time: yet, notwithstanding, as those that first bring honour into their family are commonly more worthy than most that succeed, so the first precedent (if it be good) is seldom attained by imitation: for ill, to man's nature as it stands perverted, hath a natural motion, strongest in continuance; but good, as a forced motion, strongest at first. Surely every medicine is an innovation, and he that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils: for time is the greatest innovator; and if time of course alters things to¹ the worse, and wisdom and counsel shall not alter them to the better, what shall be the end?

It is true that what is settled by custom, though it be not good, yet at least it is fit; and those things which have long gone together, are, as it were, confederate with themselves; whereas new things piece not so well; but, though they help by their utility, yet they trouble by their inconformity;² besides, they are like strangers, more admired, and less favoured. All this is true, if time stood still; which, contrariwise, moveth so round,³ that a froward retention of custom is as turbulent a thing as an innovation; and they that reverence too much old times, are but a scorn to the new. It were good, therefore, that men in their innovations, would follow the example of time itself, which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarce to be perceived; for otherwise, whatsoever is new is unlooked for—and ever it mends some, and pairs⁴ others; and he that is holpen takes it for a fortune, and thanks the time; and he that is hurt, for a wrong,

¹ To. *For.*

‘Marks and points out each man of us to slaughter.’—*Ben Jonson.*

² Inconformity. *Incongruity; discordance.*

³ Round. *Rapid.* ‘Sir Roger heard them on a round trot.’—*Addison.*

⁴ Pair. *To impair.*

‘No faith so fast,’ quoth she, ‘but flesh does *paire*.’

‘Flesh may *impaire*,’ quoth he, ‘but reason can *repaire*.’—*Spenser.*

‘What profiteth it to a man if he wyne all the world, and do *peyrynge* to his soul?’—*Wickliff's Translation of Mark viii.*

and imputeth it to the author. It is good also not to try experiments in States, except the necessity be urgent, or the utility evident; and well to beware, that it be the reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desire of change that pretendeth¹ the reformation: and lastly, that the novelty, though it be not rejected, yet be held for a suspect;² and, as the Scripture saith, 'That we make a stand upon the ancient way, and then look about us, and discover what is the straight and right way, and so to walk in it.'³

ANTITHETA ON INNOVATIONS.

PRO.

'Omnis medicina innovatio.

'Every medicament is an innovation.'

'Qui nova remedia fugit, nova mala operitur.

'He who shuns new remedies must expect new evils.'

'Novator maximus tempus: quidni igitur tempus imitemur?

'Time is the great innovator; why then not imitate Time?'

'Morosa morum retentio, res turbulenta est æque ac novitas.

'Astubborn adherence to old practices breeds tumults no less than novelty.'

'Cum per se res mutantur in deterius, si consilio in melius non mutantur, quis finis erit mali?

'Since things spontaneously change for the worse, if they be not by design changed for the better, evils must accumulate without end.'

CONTRA.

'Nullus auctor placet, præter tempus.

'One bows willingly to no authority but Time.'

'Nulla novitas absque injuria; nam præsentia convellit.

'Every novelty does some hurt, for it unsettles what is established.'

'Quæ usu obtinere, si non bona, at saltem apta inter se sunt.

'Things that are settled by long use, if not absolutely good, at least fit well together.'

'Quis novator tempus imitatur, quod novationes ita insinuat, ut sensus fallant?

'Show me the innovator who imitates Time, that slides in changes imperceptibly.'

'Quod præter spem evenit, cui prodest, minus acceptum; cui obest magis molestum.

'What happens unexpectedly, is, for that reason, less welcome to him whom it profits, and more galling to him whom it hurts.'

¹ Pretend. To put forward or exhibit as a cover.

'Lest that heavenly form, pretended

To hellish falsehood, snare them.'—Milton.

² Suspect. Something suspicious. 'If the king ends the difference, and takes away the suspect.'—Suckling.

³ Compare Jer. vi. 16.

ANNOTATIONS.

'Time is the greatest innovator.'

When Bacon speaks of time as an 'innovator,' he might have remarked, by the way—what of course he well knew—that though this is an allowable and convenient form of expression, it is not literally correct. Bishop Copleston, in the remark already referred to in the notes on 'Delays,' terms the regarding *time* as an *agent*, one of the commonest errors; for, 'in reality time *does* nothing and *is* nothing. We use it,' he goes on to say, 'as a compendious expression for all those causes which act slowly and imperceptibly. But, unless some positive cause is in action, no change takes place in the lapse of one thousand years; as, for instance, in a drop of water enclosed in a cavity of silex. The most intelligent writers are not free from this illusion. For instance, Simond, in his *Switzerland*, speaking of a mountain-scene, says—'The quarry from which the materials of the bridge came, is just above your head, and the miners are still at work: air, water, frost, weight, and *time*.' Thus, too, those politicians who object to any positive enactments affecting the Constitution, and who talk of the gentle operation of time, and of our Constitution itself being the work of time, forget that it is human agency all along which is the efficient cause. Time does nothing.' Thus far Bishop Copleston.¹

But we are so much influenced by our own use of language, that, though no one can doubt, when the question is put before him, that effects are produced not *by* time, but *in* time, we are accustomed to represent Time as armed with a scythe, and mowing down all before him.

'New things are like strangers, more admired, and less favoured.'

Bacon has omitted to notice, in reference to this point, what nevertheless is well worth remarking as a curious circumstance, that there are in most languages proverbial sayings respecting it, apparently opposed to each other; as for instance, that men are attached to what they have been used to; that use is a

¹ *Remains of Bishop Copleston.*

second nature; that they fondly cling to the institutions and practices they have been accustomed to, and can hardly be prevailed on to change them even for better; and then, again, on the other side, that men have a natural craving for novelty; that unvarying sameness is tiresome; that some variety—some change, even for the worse, is agreeably refreshing, &c.

The truth is, that in all the *serious* and important affairs of life men are attached to what they have been used to; in matters of *ornament* they covet novelty; in all systems and institutions—in all the ordinary business of life—in all fundamentals—they cling to what is the established course; in matters of detail—in what lies, as it were, on the surface—they seek variety. Man may, in reference to this point, be compared to a tree, whose stem and main branches stand year after year, but whose leaves and flowers are fresh every season.

In most countries people like change in the fashions of their dress and furniture; in almost all, they like new music, new poems, and *novels* (so called in reference to this taste), pictures, flowers, games, &c., but they are wedded to what is established in laws, institutions, systems, and in all that relates to the main *business* of life.

This distinction is one which it may often be of great importance to keep in mind. For instance, the ancient Romans and other Pagans seldom objected to the addition of a new god to their list; and it is said that some of them actually did propose to enrol Jesus among the number. This was quite consonant to the genius of their mythological system. But the overthrow of the whole system itself, and the substitution of a fundamentally different religion, was a thing they at first regarded with alarm and horror; all their feelings were enlisted against such a radical change. So also in the unreformed Churches. The enrolment from time to time of a new Saint in the calendar, or the promulgation of a new Dogma, are acceptable novelties. But those who would abolish all saint-worship, and restore Christianity to its primitive purity, are denounced as heretical innovators. Any one, therefore, who should imagine that the Gospel may have been originally received with some degree of favour on account of its being new, because, forsooth, men like novelties, and that, therefore, something short of the most overpowering miraculous proofs might have sufficed for its in-

introduction and spread,—such a person must have entirely overlooked the distinction between the kinds of things in which men do or do not favour what is new.

And the like holds good in all departments of life. New medicines, for instance, come into vogue from time to time, with or without good reason; but a fundamentally new *system* of medicine, whether right or wrong, is sure to have the strongest prejudices enlisted against it. If, when the celebrated Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood, he had, on the ground that people often readily introduced some new medicine, calculated on a favourable reception, or even a fair hearing, for his doctrine, which went to establish a fundamental revolution, he would soon have been undeceived by the vehement and general opposition with which he was encountered. Astronomers, again, hail with glad welcome (as we have often seen of late years) the discovery of a new Planet or Comet. But the doctrine of Copernicus and Galileo, which went to subvert the existing *System* of astronomy, met with a very different reception.

And it was the physicians of the highest standing that most opposed Harvey. It was the most experienced navigators that opposed Columbus' views. It was those most conversant with the management of the Post-office that were the last to approve of the plan of the uniform penny-postage. The most eminent Engineers were those most opposed to locomotive steam-carriages; and derided George Stephenson, to whom, chiefly, if not wholly, we owe the great revolution these have produced in the whole civilized World, for his extravagant expectation that they could be propelled at the rate of twelve miles an hour! For, the greater any one's experience and skill in his own department, and the more he is entitled to the deference which is proverbially due to each man in his own province ['peritis credendum est in arte sua'], the more likely, indeed, he will be to be a good judge of improvements in details, or even to introduce them himself; but the more unlikely to give a fair hearing to any proposed *radical* change. An experienced stage-coachman is likely to be a good judge of all that relates to turnpike-roads and coach-horses; but you should not consult him about railroads and steam-carriages. Again, every one knows how slowly and with what difficulty farmers are prevailed on to adopt any new system of husbandry, even when the faults of an

old established usage, and the advantage of a change, can be made evident to the senses.

An anecdote¹ is told of a gentleman who, in riding through the deep and shady Devonshire lanes, became entangled in the intricacies of their numberless windings; and not being able to obtain a sufficiently wide view of the country to know whereabouts he was, trotted briskly on, in the confident hope that he should at length come to some house whose inhabitants would direct him, or to some more open spot from which he could take a survey of the different roads, and observe whither they led. After proceeding a long time in this manner, he was surprised to find a perfect uniformity in the country through which he passed, and to meet with no human being, nor come in sight of any habitation. He was, however, encouraged by observing, as he advanced, the prints of horses' feet, which indicated that he was in no unfrequented track: these became continually more and more numerous the further he went, so as to afford him a still increasing assurance of his being in the immediate neighbourhood of some great road or populous village; and he accordingly paid the less anxious attention to the bearings of the country, from being confident that he was in the right way. But still he saw neither house nor human creature; and, at length the recurrence of the same objects by the roadside, opened his eyes to the fact, that all this time, misled by the multitude of the turnings, he had been riding in a circle; and that the footmarks, the sight of which had so cheered him, were *those of his own horse*; their number, of course, increasing with every circuit he took. Had he not fortunately made this discovery, perhaps he might have been riding there now.

The truth of the tale (and we can assure our readers that *we* at least did not invent it) does not make it the less useful by way of apologue: and the moral we would deduce from it is, that in many parts of the conduct of life, and not least in government and legislation, men are liable to *follow the track of their own footsteps*,—to set themselves an example,—and to flatter themselves that they are going right, from their conformity to their own precedent.

It is commonly and truly said, when any *new and untried*

¹ What follows is extracted from the *London Review* of 1829.

measure is proposed, that we cannot fully estimate the inconveniences it may lead to in practice; but we are convinced this is even still more the case with any system which has *long been in operation*. The evils to which it may contribute, and the obstacles it may present to the attainment of any good, are partly overlooked, or lightly regarded, on account of their familiarity, partly attributed to such other causes as perhaps really do co-operate in producing the same effects, and ranked along with the unavoidable alloys of human happiness,—the inconveniences from which no human policy can entirely exempt us. In some remote and unimproved districts, if you complain of the streets of a town being dirty and dark, as those of London were for many ages, the inhabitants tell you that the nights are cloudy and the weather rainy: as for their streets, they are just *such as they have long been*; and the expedient of paving and lighting has occurred to nobody. The ancient Romans had, probably, no idea that a civilized community could exist without slaves. That the same work can be done much better and cheaper by freemen, and that their odious system contained the seeds of the destruction of their empire, were truths which, familiarized as they were to the then existing state of society, they were not likely to suspect. ‘If you allow of no plundering,’ said an astonished Mahratta chief to some English officers, ‘how is it possible for you to maintain such fine armies as you bring into the field?’ He and his ancestors, time out of mind, had doubtless been *following their own footsteps* in the established routine; and had accordingly never dreamed that pillage is inexpedient as a source of revenue, or even one that can possibly be dispensed with. ‘That is the way it is always done, Sir;’ or ‘We always do so and so;’ are the answers generally returned by the vulgar to an inquiry as to the reason of any practice. *Recent* experiment, indeed, may bring to light and often exaggerate the defects of a new system; but *long familiarity* blinds us to those very defects.¹

And among the obstacles those have to encounter who are advocating any kind of novelty, this is one: that every instance of *failure* in the application of any new system is sure to be, by most people, attributed to the *system itself*; while in the case

¹ *London Review*, 1829.

of an old and established system, any failure is either reckoned a mere unavoidable accident, or is attributed to the *individual*.

If, for instance, some crop turns out ill, under an established system of agriculture, this failure is attributed either to the weather, or else to unskilfulness in the individual farmer; but if it takes place under a new system of husbandry, it will usually be taken as a decisive proof that the system itself is wrong. So again, if a patient dies, under the routine-system of Medicine, blame is laid, if there be any, on the *individual* practitioner: but if a patient die who has been treated according to some new system, this is likely to be taken as conclusive against the system itself. And so, in other cases.

The reluctance to change operates chiefly in reference to whatever men have been *very long* used to, and does not extend to what is recent. And hence, in any case where a change is desirable, it is a great point gained, to have brought about *some* change, even though it may have been little or no improvement; because we have then a fairer prospect of a further and better change. A *remedy of the remedy*,—a removal of *newly-introduced* inconveniences—is a change far easier to be effected than the first change. Alterations in any building are easily made *while the mortar is wet*. ‘So it is in legislation and in all human affairs. While the most inconvenient and absurd laws are suffered to remain unchanged for successive generations, hardly an Act is passed that any defects in it are not met by ‘acts to amend’ it, in the next and in succeeding sessions.

‘Those who remember the University of Oxford at the commencement of this century, when, in fact, it hardly deserved the name of an university,—who remember with what difficulty, and after what long delay, the first statute for Degree-examinations was introduced—how palpable were the defects of that statute, and how imperfectly it worked,—and, lastly, how easily, in comparison, these defects were, one by one, remedied, and successive improvements from time to time introduced,—such persons must have profited little by experience, if they deprecate the application of any remedy to any existing law or institution that is in itself evil, for fear the remedy should not be such, in the first essay, as to meet their wishes.’¹

¹ See *Kingdom of Christ*, Appendix to Essay ii. note O, p. 355, 4th edition.

‘*A froward retention of custom is as turbulent as an innovation ; and they that reverence old times too much are but a scorn to the new.*’

To avoid the two opposite evils—the liability to sudden and violent changes, and the adherence to established usage, when inconvenient or mischievous,—to give the requisite stability to governments and other institutions, without shutting the door against improvement,—this is a problem which both ancient and modern legislators have not well succeeded in solving. Some, like the ancient Medes and Persians, and like Lycurgus, have attempted to prohibit all change ; but those who constantly appeal to the wisdom of their ancestors as a sufficient reason for perpetuating everything these have established, forget two things : first, that they cannot hope to persuade all successive generations of men that there was once one generation of such infallible wisdom as to be entitled to control all their descendants for ever ; which is to make the earth, in fact, the possession not of the living, but of the dead ; and, secondly, that even supposing our ancestors gifted with such infallibility, many cases must arise in which it may be reasonably doubted whether they themselves would not have advocated, if living, changes called for by altered circumstances. For instance, those who denoted the southern quarter from *meridies* (noon) would not have been so foolish as to retain that language had they gone to live in a hemisphere where the sun at noon is in the north. But, as Dr. Cooke Taylor remarks in *The Bishop* : ‘An antiquated form, however perverted from its original purpose, gratifies the lazy in their love of ease ; it saves them the trouble of exchanging their old *mumpsimus* for the new *sumpsimus* : and *new* the *sumpsimus* must appear, though it be a restoration ; it averts the mortification of confessing error, which is always so abhorrent to the self-satisfied stupidity of those who grow old without gaining experience.’

‘*Vel quia nil rectum, nisi quod placuit sibi, ducunt ;
Vel quia turpe putant parere minoribus, et quæ
Imberbi didicere, senes perdenda fateri.*’

It is to be observed, however, that in almost every department of life, the evil that has very long existed will often be

less clearly perceived, and less complained of, than in proportion to the actual extent of the evil.

‘If you look to any department of government, or to any parish or diocese, that has long been left to the management of apathetic or inefficient persons, you will usually find that there are few or no *complaints*; because complaints having long since been found vain, will have long since ceased to be made. There will be no great arrears of business undone, and of applications unanswered; because business will not have been brought before those who it is known will not transact it; nor applications made, to which no answer can be hoped for. Abuses, and defects, and evils of various kinds, which ought to have been prevented or remedied, men will have learned to submit to as to visitations of Providence; having been left without redress till they have at length forgotten that any redress is due, or is possible: and this stagnation will have come to be regarded as the natural state of things.

‘Hence, it will often happen that in a parish for instance, where for a long time very little has been done, it will appear at first sight as if there were in fact very little to do: the spiritual wants of members of the Church not appearing to be unattended to, because many persons will have *ceased* to be members of the Church, and many others will be unconscious that they have any spiritual wants.

‘And in a Church, accordingly, that has been long without an efficient government, the want of such government will often be very inadequately perceived, from its not even occurring to men to consider whether the enormous increase of dissent, of internal discord, and of indifference to the Church, are evils which it comes within the province of a government in any degree to prevent or mitigate.’¹

With those who maintain that the present is *not the best* time,—on account of the violence of contending parties—for the restoration of a Church-government, I so far agree, that I am convinced it would have been *much better* to have taken the step several years ago; before the excitement caused by one of those parties had arisen; and yet better, some years earlier still, when

¹ This, and another passage in this note, are extracted from *Thoughts on Church-government*.

the removal of religious disabilities first left the Church destitute of any legislature consisting exclusively of its own members : and that, again, a still earlier period would have been preferable, when considerable attention was for a time attracted to a work on the subject, by a person, then, holding the office of Archdeacon.

‘ But it is far from being sufficient,—as seems to be the notion of some persons—to show that the present is not the *fittest conceivable* occasion for taking a certain step. Besides this, it is requisite to show,—not merely that a better occasion may be *imagined*,—or that a better occasion is *past*;—that the Sibylline Books might have been purchased cheaper *some time ago*;—but that a more suitable occasion is likely to arise *hereafter* : and *how soon* ; and also, that the mischief which may be *going on during the interval* will be more than compensated by the superior suitableness of that future occasion ; in short, that it will have been worth waiting for. And in addition to all this, it is requisite to show also the probability that when this golden opportunity shall arise, men will be more *disposed to take advantage* of it than they have heretofore appeared to be ;—that they will not again fall into apathetic security, and fondness for indefinite procrastination.

‘ This last point is as needful to be established as any; for it is remarkable that those who deprecate taking any step *just now*, in these times of extraordinary excitement, did not, on those former occasions, come forward to propose taking advantage of a comparatively calmer state of things. They neither made any call, nor responded to the call made by others.

‘ And indeed all experience seems to show—comparing the apathy on the subject which was so general at those periods, with the altered state of feeling now existing,—that a great and pressing emergency, and *nothing else*, will induce men to take any step in this matter; and that a period of dissension and perplexing difficulty, is, though not, *in itself*, the most suitable occasion for such a step, yet—constituted as human nature is—the best, because the *only* occasion on which one can hope that it will be taken. A season of famine may have been, in some respects, a bad occasion for altering the corn-laws; but experience showed that nothing less would suffice.

‘ When the valley of Martigny, in Switzerland, was threatened

(a good many years ago) with a frightful deluge from the bursting of a lake formed by a glacier which had dammed up a river, the inhabitants were for some time not sufficiently alarmed to take steps for averting the danger, by cutting channels to let off the water. They cannot, therefore, be said to have chosen *the best time* for commencing their operations; for had they begun earlier,—as soon as ever the dam was formed—the work would have been much easier, and probably all damage would have been prevented. As it was, they had to encounter much difficulty, and, after all, were but partially successful: for the undrained portion of the lake did at length burst the barrier, and considerable damage ensued; perhaps a fourth part of what *would* have taken place had things been left to themselves. But they were wise in not deferring their operations yet longer, in the hope that matters would mend spontaneously, when they saw that the evil was daily increasing. And after having mitigated in a great degree the calamity that did ensue, they took measures to provide against the like in future.

‘Still, however, we must expect to be told by many, that, sooner or later, matters will come right spontaneously, if left untouched; that, *in time*, though we cannot tell how soon, a period of extraordinary excitement is sure to be succeeded by one of comparative calm. In the meantime it is forgotten at *what cost* such spontaneous restoration of tranquillity is usually purchased—how much the fire will have consumed before it shall have burnt out of itself. The case is very similar to what takes place in the natural body: the anguish of acute inflammation, when left to itself, is succeeded by the calm of a mortification: a limb is amputated, or drops off; and the body—but no longer the whole body—is restored to a temporary ease, at the expense of a mutilation. Who can say that a large proportion of those who are now irrecoverably alienated from the Church, might not have been at this moment sound members of it, had timely steps been taken, not by any departure from the principles of our Reformers, but by following more closely the track they marked out for us?’

One, however, of the greatest difficulties attending the introduction of any *alteration* into any Formulary, is, that *inferences* from this are likely to be drawn, which would not at all have occurred to any one from the same words, if they had been in

the same place originally. For instance, there are religious Communities who have not introduced into their Services the *Creeds*, and the *Commandments*, but which are not thereupon suspected of having denied the Faith, or annulled moral obligation. Yet this suspicion *would* be likely to arise against any Church which did use those Forms, and afterwards *expunged* them. Whenever there is an *amputation*, there will be a *wound* and a lasting *scar*.

It is true, that whatever is established, and already existing, has a presumption on its side; that is, the burden of proof lies on those who propose a change. No one is called on to bring reasons *against* any alteration, till some reasons have been offered *for* it. But the deference which is thus claimed for old laws and institutions is sometimes extended (through the ambiguity of language—the use of ‘old’ for ‘ancient’)¹ to what are called ‘the good old times;’ as if the world had formerly been older, instead of younger, than it is now. But it is manifest that the advantage possessed by old *men*—that of long experience—must belong to the present age more than to any preceding.

Is there not, then, some reason for the ridicule which Bacon speaks of, as attaching to those ‘who too much reverence old times?’ To say that no changes shall take place, is to talk idly. We might as well pretend to control the motions of the earth. To resolve that none shall take place *except* what are undesigned and accidental, is to resolve that though a clock may gain or lose indefinitely, at least we will take care that it shall never be regulated. ‘If time’ (to use Bacon’s warning words) ‘alters things to the worse, and wisdom and counsel shall not alter them to the better, what shall be the end?’

‘It were good that men, in their innovations, would follow the example of Time itself, which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly and by degrees scarce to be perceived.’

There is no more striking instance of the silent and imperceptible changes brought about by what is called ‘Time,’ than that of a language becoming dead. To point out the precise period at which Greek or Latin ceased to be a living language,

¹ See *Elements of Logic*, Appendix.

would be as impossible as to say when a man becomes *old*. And much confusion of thought and many important practical results arise from not attending to this. For example, many persons have never reflected on the circumstance that one of the earliest translations of the Scriptures into a vernacular tongue was made by the Church of Rome. The Latin *Vulgate* was so called from its being in the vulgar, *i.e.* the popular language then spoken in Italy and the neighbouring countries; and that version was evidently made on purpose that the Scriptures might be intelligibly read by, or read to, the mass of the people. But gradually and imperceptibly Latin was superseded by the languages derived from it—Italian, Spanish, and French,—while the Scriptures were still left in Latin: and when it was proposed to translate them into modern tongues, this was regarded as a perilous innovation; though it is plain that the real innovation was that which had taken place imperceptibly; since the very object proposed by the Vulgate-version was, that the Scriptures might *not* be left in an unknown tongue. Yet we meet with many among the fiercest declaimers against the Church of Rome, who earnestly deprecate any the slightest changes in our authorized version, and cannot endure even the gradual substitution of other words for such as have become obsolete, for fear of ‘unsettling men’s minds.’ It never occurs to them that it was this very dread that kept the Scriptures in the Latin tongue, when that gradually became a dead language.

It has been suggested in a popular Periodical, that if the mass of the People had been habitual readers of the Vulgate, Latin might have never *become* a dead language. No doubt, if printing had been in use in those days, and the People generally had had as ready access to cheap Bibles as now, this would have retarded and modified the change of the language. But the case which is adduced as parallel is very far from being such: namely, the stability given to *our* language by the use of our English version. For, it ought not to have been forgotten that our country was not, like Italy—subjugated and overrun (subsequently to the translation of the Bible) by numerous tribes speaking a different language. As it is, there can indeed be no doubt that our Authorized Version, and our Prayer-book (and, in a minor degree, Shakespere and Bacon)

have contributed to give some fixedness to our language: but after all, the changes that have actually taken place in it are greater than perhaps some persons would at first sight suspect. For, though the words in our Bible and Prayer-book which have become wholly obsolete, are but few, the number is many times greater, of words which, though still in common use, have greatly changed their meaning: such as 'conversation,' 'convenient,' 'carriage,' (Acts xxi. 15) 'prevent,' 'reasonable,' 'lively,' 'incomprehensible,' those most important words 'shall' and 'will,' and many others.¹ And words which have thus changed their meaning are, of course, much more likely to perplex and bewilder the reader, than those entirely out of use. These latter only leave him in darkness; the others mislead him by a false light.

Universally, the removal at once of the accumulated effects gradually produced in a very long time, is apt to strike the vulgar as a novelty, when, in truth, it is only a *restoration* of things to their original state.²

For example, suppose a clock to lose only one minute and a few seconds in the week, and to be left uncorrected for a year; it will then have lost a whole hour; and any one who then sets it right, will appear to the ignorant to have suddenly robbed them of that amount of time.

This case is precisely analogous to that of the change of *style*. There was, in what is called the Julian Calendar (that fixed by Julius Cæsar), a minute error, which made every fourth year a trifle too long; in the course of centuries the error amounted to eleven days, and when, about a century ago, we rectified this (as had been done in Roman Catholic countries a century earlier), this mode of reckoning was called 'the *new style*.' The Russians, who still use what is called the 'old style,' are, now, not eleven, but twelve days wrong; that is, they are one day further from the original position of the days of the month, as fixed in the time of Julius Cæsar: and this they call *adhering* to the Julian Calendar.

So, also, to reject the religious practices and doctrines that have crept in by little and little since the days of the Apostles,

¹ See Bishop Hinds on the *Authorized Version*; and also a most useful little *Vocabulary of Obsolete Words* in our version, by the Rev. Mr. Booker.

² See *Cautions for the Times*, No. 2.

and thus to restore Christianity to what it was under *them*, appears to the unthinking to be forsaking the old religion and bringing in a new. Bishop Hinds's views, in his work on *The Three Temples*, have been censured (as he himself had anticipated) as *novel*; though so familiar to the Apostles as to have tinged all their language; as in their use of the word 'edify,' &c.

It is to be observed that hurtful changes are often attributed to harmless ones; and apprehensions are entertained that a *change*, however small, is necessarily a dangerous thing, as tending to *produce* extensive and hurtful innovations. Many instances may be found of small alterations being *followed* by great and mischievous ones ('Post hoc; ergo propter hoc'); but I doubt whether all history can furnish an instance of the greater innovation having been, properly speaking, *caused* by the lesser. Of course, the first change will always *precede* the second; and many mischievous innovations *have* taken place; but these may often be explained by the too long postponement of the requisite changes; by the neglect of the homely old proverb—'A tile in time saves nine.' A house may stand for ages if some very small repairs and alterations are promptly made from time to time as they are needed; whereas if decay is suffered to go on unheeded, it may become necessary to pull down and rebuild the whole house. The longer any needful reform is delayed, the greater and the more difficult, and the more sudden, and the more dangerous and unsettling, it will be. And then, perhaps, those who had caused this delay by their pertinacious resistance to any change at all, will point to these evils—evils brought on by themselves—in justification of their conduct. If they would have allowed a few broken slates on the roof to be at once replaced by new ones, the timbers would not have rotted, nor the walls, in consequence, leaned, nor would the house have thence needed to be demolished and rebuilt.

It is to be observed, however, that there does exist a danger from any change which, though not bad in itself, is introduced *irregularly*. And against this danger, a man of real good sense will endeavour to provide, by observing betimes what changes are desirable, or unavoidable, and seeking, not to have them put off for a few years, but introduced in a regular and, consequently, a safer mode. If, by competent authority an incon-

venient law is *repealed*, or some defect supplied in any of our Institutions, civil or Ecclesiastical, this does not shake the whole Fabric. But if, instead of this, the object is accomplished by a *violation* of law, or by an irregular stretch of power, a dangerous PRECEDENT is created, which may lead to evils far greater than the immediate good at first aimed at. Indeed, a very large portion of all the abuses that have ever existed, may be traced to some evil *precedent* originating in some step that was in itself beneficial. And the obvious precaution against this danger is, (as I have said) to *open* the door betimes to needful changes, instead of waiting till the door is *broken open* so that it cannot afterwards be *shut* against such as are mischievous.

Most wise, therefore, is Bacon's admonition, to copy the great innovator Time, by vigilantly watching for, and promptly counteracting, the first small insidious approaches of decay, and introducing gradually, from time to time, such small improvements (individually small, but collectively great) as there may be room for, and which will prevent the necessity of violent and sweeping reformatations.

'It is good not to try experiments in States, except the necessity be urgent, or the utility evident; and well to beware, that it be the reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desire of change that pretendeth the reformation.'

It has been above remarked that most men have no desire for change, *as* change, in what concerns the serious business of life. True it is, that great and sudden and violent changes do take place—that ancient institutions have been recklessly overthrown—that sanguinary revolutions have taken place in quick succession, and that new schemes, often the most wild and extravagant, both in civil and religious matters, have been again and again introduced. We need not seek far to find countries that have had, within the memory of persons now living, not less than nine or ten perfectly distinct systems of government. But no changes of this kind ever originate in the mere *love of change for its own sake*. Never do men adopt a new form of government, or a new system of religion, merely from that delight in variety which leads them to seek new amusements, or to alter the fashion of their dress. They seek changes in what relates to serious matters of fundamental importance, only

through the pressure of severe suffering, or of some vehement want, or, at least, from the perception of some great evil or deficiency. Widely as the vulgar are often mistaken as to the *causes* of any distress, or as to the *remedies* to be sought, the distress itself is real, when they aim at any great revolution. If an infant beats its nurse, although its acts are as irrational as those of a mad dog, you may be assured that it is really in pain. And when men are suffering from a famine or pestilence, though it is absurd for them to seek to obtain relief by establishing a new kind of senate or parliament, or by setting up a dictator, or by slaughtering all people of property, still the evil itself is real, and is keenly felt; and it is *that*, and not a mere love of change, for change sake, that drives them to take the most irrational steps.¹

And when evils are really occasioned by absurd and oppressive laws and tyrannical governments, it is right and rational to aim at a change, though the changes which an infuriated populace does bring about will usually be both irrational and wrong—will overthrow the good along with the evil, and will be pregnant with worse evils than they seek to remedy. The ancient despotism of France, detestable as it was, did not cause more misery in a century than the Reign of Terror did in a year. And, universally, the longer and the more grievously any people have been oppressed, the more violent and extravagant will be the reaction. And the people will often be in the condition of King Lear, going to and fro between his daughters, and deprived first of half his attendants, and then of half the remainder, then of all.

Talleyrand foretold a revolution in England (similar to that of France) at the time when the agitation about the Reform-Bill was going on. He even said that it was *begun*; and claimed to be himself ‘well-acquainted with revolutions.’ But it is plain he did not understand the difference between the English People and the French; and indeed that he was ill-acquainted with human nature; not understanding that the violence of any popular movement will be proportioned to the degree in which men have been degraded and brutalized, and

¹ On this subject there are some excellent observations in an Article in the *Edinburgh Review* (Oct. 1842, p. 11, 12, 13) on *Alison's History*.

maddened, by long oppression. If the English had been for one or two centuries trampled down as the mass of the French Population had been, and if, moreover, the religious influence exercised on them (as far as they were under any at all) had tended to exclude them from the study of the Scriptures, then, no doubt, they would have rushed into the most frightful excesses. As it was, they broke several windows; but there were probably not so many panes of glass demolished in all, as there were heads cut off in a month, during the worst periods of the French revolution.

Yet at that time, and also at the beginning of the French revolution, there were many in England who were completely panic-struck, and fully believed that we were on the eve of just such a state of things as then existed in France. They were like a man who seeing a neighbouring cottage, of wood and thatch, in a blaze, thinks he can never sufficiently deluge with water his own house, of brick and stone.

Some persons, fewer in number, but several of them men of decided ability, committed the converse mistake, of confidently anticipating, at the beginning of the first revolution in France, an abundance of unalloyed advantages to that Country: and they were as much surprised as horrified at the actual course of events.

Both parties equally manifested an ignorance either of human nature, or of the circumstances of the two countries respectively. The one party were soon woefully undeceived by the events: of the other, some are still to be found who cling to the belief, that, but for the war, all the horrors of the French Revolution would have taken place in England.

But although it is true that innovations in important matters are never sought through mere love of change for its own sake, but for relief from some evil, the danger is not the less, of rash and ill-advised innovations; because evils, greater or less, and more or less of imperfection, always do exist in all human institutions administered by fallible men.

And what is more, there is seldom any kind of evil that does not admit of a complete and effectual remedy, if we are careless about introducing some different, and, perhaps, greater evil in its place. It is seldom very difficult to dam up a stream that incommodes us; only we should remember that it will then

force for itself a new channel, or else spread out into an unwholesome marsh. The evils of contested elections, the bribery, the intimidation, and the deception which they often give rise to, are undeniable; and they would be completely cured by suppressing the House of Commons altogether, or making the seats in it hereditary; but we should not be gainers by the exchange. There are evils belonging specifically to a pure monarchy, and to an oligarchy, and to a democracy, and to a mixed government: and a change in the form of government would always remedy one class of evils, and introduce another. And under all governments, civil and ecclesiastical, there are evils arising from the occasional incapacity or misconduct of those to whom power is entrusted; evils which might be at once remedied by introducing the far greater evil of anarchy, and leaving every man to 'do as is right in his own eyes.' There are inconveniences, again, from being governed by fixed laws, which must always bear hard on some particular cases; but we should be no gainers by leaving every judge to act like a Turkish *cadi*, entirely at his own discretion. And the like holds good in all departments of life. There are careless and inefficient clergymen: abolish endowments, and resort to what is called the 'voluntary system,' and you will have no inactive ministers; only 'preaching' will, as Paley observes, 'become a mode of begging: and a Minister whose flock consists of persons *all* engaged in some one bad practice, such as smugglers, rebels, slave-dealers, or wreckers, will find that he is a man hired to keep their conscience quiet in a wrong course.' This also may be cured by prohibiting the ministers receiving any contributions; only, this will

¹ It has been urged, as if in answer to this, that there are, under the voluntary system, conscientious Ministers, who would submit to anything rather than suppress important truths. Heaven forbid I should doubt this! But let one of these conscientious Ministers try the experiment of preaching Abolitionist-doctrine in a Slave-State; and he will soon find his stipend withdrawn, and a successor appointed. If the congregation find one man not teaching what pleases them, they will look out for another who will. [See Mrs. Stowe's 'DRED.'] Far be it from us to reproach those who, in default of endowments, receive or pay wages: for 'the labourer is worthy of his HIRE.' Only, let them not reproach others for having what they call a 'hired Ministry;' meaning what is in reality an *unhired*; that is, those who are supported by endowments. [See a Letter to Mr. James, in the *Remains of Bp. Dickinson*.] One Reviewer however remarks that such a state of things as I have alluded to, though it may possibly exist somewhere, certainly cannot be found in *any part of the British Empire*. Happy ignorance!

confine the ministry to men of fortune. And so of the rest.

One of the greatest evils produced by the thorough-going Reformer is that the *alarm* which he excites is the great strengthener of the ultra-conservative principle. 'See what we shall come to if we listen to these lovers of change!' This is one of the infinite number of cases in which evils are brought on by their *contraries*: in short, by a re-action.

The mass of mankind rush eagerly into whatever extreme happens to be the fashion of the day; like planks floating to and fro with the tides. Those a few degrees above them, see, and try to avoid an error, but take no precautions against a contrary extreme. 'Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt.' They are like a mariner sailing and rowing with all his might as far as possible against a flood-tide, and never thinking that an ebb is to come. A wise man always anticipates re-actions, and takes his measures accordingly. But I have already dwelt upon this point in the remarks on 'Superstition.'

It should be remembered, then, that though pure conservatism is a folly, and though it is true that men do not covet innovation, as such, with equal blindness, still there is as much folly, and as much danger, in a blindly reformatory principle. For though men do not seek a change except when they perceive some evil, inconvenience, or imperfection, the thorough-going Reformer always *will* find some—not unreal—ground of complaint, in the working of every institution. 'Erunt vitia donec homines.' And if every house is to be pulled down and rebuilt till we have got one that is perfect, and, moreover, that every one will think such, we shall be as constantly in brick and mortar as if we did delight in pulling down for its own sake.

And we should remember, also, that 'custom will often blind one to the good as well as to the evil effects of any long-established system. The agues engendered by a marsh (like that ancient one which bore the name and surrounded the city of Camarina), and which have so long been common as to be little regarded, may not be its only effects: it may be also a defence against an enemy. The Camarinæans having drained the swamp, their city became healthy, but was soon after besieged and taken. The *preventive* effects, indeed, whether good or evil, of any long-established system are hardly ever

duly appreciated. But though no law or system, whether actually existing or proposed, can be expected to be unexceptionable, or should have its defects pointed out without any notice of corresponding advantages, it is most important to *examine* every measure, whether new or old, and to try it on its intrinsic merits; always guarding against the tendency to acquiesce without inquiry in the necessity of any existing practice. In short, we should, on the one hand, not venture rashly on untrodden paths without a careful survey of the country, and, on the other hand, to be on our guard against following, in confident security, the track of our own footsteps.¹

The two kinds of absurdity here adverted to may be compared respectively to the acts of two kinds of irrational animals, a moth, and a horse. The moth rushes into a flame, and is burned: and the horse obstinately stands still in a stable that is on fire, and is burned likewise. One may often meet with persons of opposite dispositions, though equally unwise, who are accordingly prone respectively to these opposite errors: the one partaking more of the character of the moth, and the other of the horse. This comparison, I may add, suggests a practical rule. The only way to lead a horse out of a burning stable, is to put on him his accustomed *gear*; the saddle and bridle, if a saddle-horse, or the collar, if a draught-horse; and then by the force of association, he will submit to be led out. So also, a man of the disposition alluded to, will the more readily comply with a suggestion, if put into the form, as far as may be, of his accustomed practice. He may be led, if put into his usual *gear*.

The opposite course to this is taken by not a few, who have a passion to be accounted *original*. They exaggerate the novelty of anything they propose, and put whatever they say into the most paradoxical form, as if on purpose to make people stare. They must be always broaching something that is new; or at least, as the phrase is, putting ‘old things in a new light.’ But if your object be to instruct, convince, or persuade, rather than to astonish, you will find it quite as often advisable to *put new things in an old light*.

¹ See Appendix E. to *Lectures on Political Economy*, p. 225.

Bacon's maxim, therefore, is most wise, to 'make a stand upon the *ancient* way, and look about us to discover what is the *best* way;' neither changing at once anything that is established, merely because of some evils actually existing, without considering whether we can substitute something that is, on the whole, better; nor, again, steadily rejecting every plan or system that can be proposed, till one can be found that is open to no objections at all. For nothing framed or devised by the wit of Man ever was, or can be, perfect; and therefore to condemn and reject everything that is imperfect, and has some evils attending on it, is a folly which may lead equally—and indeed often has led—to each of two opposite absurdities: either an obstinate adherence to what is established, however bad, because nothing absolutely unexceptionable can be substituted; or again, a perpetual succession of revolutions till we can establish—which is totally impossible—some system completely faultless, or so framed as to *keep* itself in good order. To conceive such a system, whether actually existing or ideal, is to be beset by the same chimerical hope in human affairs that has misled so many speculators in mechanics,—the vain expectation of attaining the *perpetual motion*.

To avoid the opposite evils, of rash changes, and of bigoted and blind adherence to whatever is established,—to give the requisite *stability* to laws and institutions, yet without precluding needful alterations—this is the problem which (as I have said above) politicians have been vainly attempting to solve for many centuries. A solution of it is suggested in the little Work above alluded to, the *Expedition to the Interior of New Holland*. The system there described is this: all the laws of the supposed State are divided into two classes; the ordinary laws, and the *fundamental* laws. These latter, the Legislature has no power, *directly* and *immediately*, to enact, alter, or annul; but it is competent to any Member to move that this or that ordinary-law shall, at the end of the Session, be enrolled in the list of fundamental laws; or, that such and such a fundamental law, shall, at the end of the Session, be removed from the list, and become an ordinary-law; still binding; but open to repeal. But (as a still further safeguard) no such motion can pass but by an *absolute* majority of the whole House; all who do not

vote *for* it, being reckoned, whether present or absent, as voting *against* it.

Thus a legitimate mode is provided for introducing, when thought needful, any great change, warily and deliberately, but not hastily and rashly.

The scheme is developed in p. 96-108 of the Work referred to.

This essay of Bacon's is one of the most instructive and most generally useful; 'coming home,' as he himself expresses it, 'to men's business and bosoms.' For though few men are likely to be called on to take part in the reformation of any public institutions, yet there is no one of us but what ought to engage in the important work of *self*-reformation. And according to the well-known proverb, 'If each would sweep before his own door, we should have a clean street.' Some may have more and some less, of dust and other nuisances to sweep away; some of one kind, and some of another. But those who have the least to do, have something to do; and they should feel it an encouragement to do it, that they can so easily remedy the beginnings of small evils before they have accumulated into a great one.

Begin reforming, therefore, *at once*: *proceed* in reforming, steadily and cautiously, and *go on* reforming for ever.

ESSAY XXV. OF DISPATCH.

AFFECTED dispatch is one of the most dangerous things to business that can be: it is like that which the physicians call predigestion, or hasty digestion, which is sure to fill the body full of crudities, and secret seeds of diseases; therefore, measure not dispatch by the time of sitting, but by the advancement of the business: and as in races it is not the large stride, or high lift, that makes the speed, so in business, the keeping close to the matter, and not taking of it too much at once, procureth dispatch. It is the care of some, only to come off speedily for the time, or to contrive some false periods of business, because¹ they may seem men of dispatch: but it is one thing to abbreviate by contracting, another by cutting off; and business so handled at several sittings or meetings goeth commonly backward and forward in an unsteady manner. I knew a wise man that had it for a by-word, when he saw men hasten to a conclusion, ‘Stay a little, that we may make an end the sooner.’²

On the other side, true dispatch is a rich thing; for time is the measure of business, as money is of wares; and business is bought at a dear hand where there is small dispatch. The Spartans and Spaniards have been noted to be of small dispatch: ‘Mi venga la muerte de Spagna,’³ for then it will be sure to be long in coming.

Give good hearing to those that give the first information in business; and rather direct them in the beginning than interrupt them in the continuance of their speeches; for he that is put out of his own order will go forward and backward, and be more tedious while he waits upon his memory, than he could have been if he had gone on in his own course. But sometimes it is seen that the moderator is more troublesome than the actor.

Iterations⁴ are commonly loss of time: but there is no such

¹ Because. *That; in order that.* ‘The multitude rebuked them, *because* they should hold their peace.’—*Matt. xx. 31.*

² Sir Amyas Paulet.

³ ‘May my death come from Spain.’

⁴ Iteration. *Repetition.*

‘What means this *iteration*, woman?’—*Shakespeare.*

gain of time as to iterate often the state of the question ; for it chaseth away many a frivolous speech as it is coming forth. Long and curious speeches are as fit for dispatch as a robe or mantle with a long train is for a race. Prefaces, and passages,¹ and excusations,² and other speeches of reference to the person, are great wastes of time ; and though they seem to proceed of³ modesty, they are bravery.⁴ Yet beware of being too material⁵ when there is any impediment or obstruction in men's wills ; for pre-occupation of mind ever requireth preface of speech, like a fomentation to make the unguent enter.

Above all things, order and distribution, and singling out of parts, is the life of dispatch, so as the distribution be not too subtle ; for he that doth not divide will never enter well into business, and he that divideth too much will never come out of it clearly. To chuse time is to save time ; and an unseasonable motion is but beating the air. There be three parts of business—the preparation, the debate, or examination, and the perfection,—whereof, if you look for dispatch, let the middle only be the work of many, and the first and last the work of few. The proceeding upon somewhat conceived in writing doth for the most part facilitate dispatch ; for though it should be wholly rejected, yet that negative is more pregnant of direction than an indefinite, as ashes are more generative than dust.⁶

¹ Passages. *Introductory approaches.*

‘And with his pointed dart
Explores the nearest *passage* to her heart.’

² Excusations. *Excuses ; apologies.* ‘The punishment of his *excusations*.’—*Brown.*

³ Of. *From.* ‘I have received *of* the Lord that which I also delivered unto you.’—1 *Cor.* xi. 23. ‘A blow whose violence grew not *of* fury, not *of* strength ; or *of* strength proceeding *of* fury.’—*Sidney.*

⁴ Bravery. *Boasting.* ‘For a *bravery* upon this occasion of power they crowned their new king in Dublin.’—*Bacon.*

⁵ Material. *Full of matter.*

‘A *material* fool.’—*Shakespeare.*

‘His speech even charmed his cares,
So order’d, so *material*.’—Chapman’s version of the 24th *Iliad.*

⁶ He means doubtless *wood-ashes*, which are a fertilizing manure.

ANNOTATIONS.

'Time is the measure of business.' *'To chuse time is to save time, and unseasonable motion is but beating the air.'*

Some persons are what is called 'slow and sure;' sure, that is, in cases that will admit of leisurely deliberation; though they require so much time for forming a right judgment, and devising right plans, that in cases where promptitude is called for, they utterly fail. Buonaparte used to say, that one of the principal requisites for a general, was, an accurate calculation of *time*; for if your adversary can bring a powerful force to attack a certain post ten minutes sooner than you can bring up a sufficient supporting force, you are beaten, even though all the rest of your plans be never so good.

So also, if you are overtaken by an inundation, ten minutes spent in deciding on the best road for escaping, may make escape impossible.

Some again, are admirable at a bright thought—a shrewd guess—an ingenious scheme hit off on the spur of the moment, but, either will not give themselves time for quiet deliberation in cases where there is no hurry, or cannot deliberate to good purpose. They can shoot flying, but cannot take deliberate aim.

And some again there are who delay and deliberate, when promptitude is essential, and make up for this by taking a hasty step when they have plenty of time before them; or they are bold first, and prudent afterwards; first administering the strong dose, and then, when the step cannot be re-called, carefully examining the patient's tongue and pulse.

It is worth remarking, that many persons are of such a disposition as to be nearly incapable of *remaining* in doubt on any point that is not wholly uninteresting to them. They speedily make up their minds on each question, and come to *some* conclusion, whether there are any good grounds for it or not. And judging—as men are apt to do, in all matters—of others, from themselves, they usually discredit the most solemn assurances of any one who professes to be in a state of doubt on some question; taking for granted that if you do not adopt their opinion, you must be of the opposite.

Others again there are, who are capable of remaining in doubt as long as the reasons on each side seem exactly *balanced*; but not otherwise. Such a person, as soon as he perceives any—the smallest—preponderance of probability on one side of a question, can no more refrain from deciding immediately, and with full conviction, on that side, than he could continue to stand, after having lost his equilibrium, in a slanting position, like the famous tower at Pisa. And he will, accordingly, be disposed to consider an acknowledgment that there are somewhat the stronger reasons on one side, as equivalent to a confident decision.

The tendency to such an error is the greater, from the circumstance, that there are so many cases, in practice, wherein it is essentially necessary to come to a *practical* decision, even where there are no sufficient grounds for feeling *fully convinced* that it is the right one. A traveller may be in doubt, and may have no means of deciding, with just confidence, which of two roads he ought to take; while yet he must, at a venture, take one of them. And the like happens in numberless transactions of ordinary life, in which we are obliged practically to make up our minds at once to take one course or another, even where there are no sufficient grounds for a full conviction of the understanding.

The infirmities above mentioned are those of *ordinary* minds. A smaller number of persons, among whom, however, are to be found a larger proportion of the intelligent, are prone to the opposite extreme; that of not deciding, as long as there are reasons to be found on both sides, even though there may be a clear and strong preponderance on the one, and even though the case may be such as to call for a practical decision. As the one description of men rush hastily to a conclusion, and trouble themselves little about premises, so, the other carefully examine premises, and care too little for conclusions. The one decide without inquiring, the other inquire without deciding.

‘Beware of being too material.’

On this point I take the liberty of quoting a passage from the *Elements of Rhetoric* [p. 3, ch. i. § 2]:—

‘It is remarked by anatomists that the nutritive quality is

not the only requisite in food,—that a certain degree of *distension* of the stomach is required to enable it to act with its full powers,—and that it is for this reason hay or straw must be given to horses as well as corn, in order to supply the necessary bulk. Something analogous to this takes place with respect to the generality of minds,—which are incapable of thoroughly digesting and assimilating what is presented to them in a very small compass. Many a one is capable of deriving that instruction from a moderate-sized volume, which he could not receive from a very small pamphlet, even more perspicuously written, and containing everything that is to the purpose. It is necessary that the attention should be detained for a certain time on the subject; and persons of unphilosophical mind, though they can attend to what they read or hear, are unapt to dwell upon it in the way of subsequent meditation.’¹

‘ *True dispatch is a rich thing.*’

It is a rare and admirable thing when a man is able both to discern which cases admit, and which not, of calm deliberation; and also to be able to meet both in a suitable manner. Such a character is most graphically described by Thucydides in his account of Themistocles; who, according to him, was second to none in forming his plans on cautious inquiry and calm reflection, when circumstances allowed him, and yet excelled most men in hitting off some device to meet some sudden emergency: [αὐτοσχεδιαζεν τὰ δεόντα.]

If you cannot find a counsellor who *combines* these two kinds of qualification (which is a thing not to be calculated on), you should seek for some of each sort; one, to devise and mature measures that will admit of delay; and another, to make prompt guesses, and suggest sudden expedients. A bow, such as is approved by our modern toxophilites, must be *backed*—that is, made of *two* slips of wood glued together: one a very *elastic*, but somewhat *brittle* wood; the other much less elastic, but very *tough*. The one gives the requisite spring, the other keeps it from breaking. If you have two such counsellors as are here spoken of, you are provided with a *backed* bow.

¹ *Elements of Rhetoric*, Part III. chap. i. § 2.

And if you yourself are of one of the two above-mentioned characters—the slow-hound, or the grey-hound—you should especially provide yourself with an adviser of the opposite class : one to give you warning of dangers and obstacles, and to caution you against precipitate decisions, if that be your tendency ; or one to make guesses, and suggest expedients, if you are one of the slow and sure.

Those who are clever [in the proper sense—*i.e. quick*] are apt to be so proud of it as to disdain taking time for cautious inquiry and deliberation ; and those of the opposite class are perhaps no less likely to pride themselves on their cautious wisdom. But these latter will often, in practice, obtain this advantage over those they are opposed to—that they will defeat them without direct opposition, by merely asking for postponement and reconsideration, in cases where (as Bacon expresses it) ‘ not to decide, is to decide.’ If you *defer* sowing a field till the seedtime is past, you have decided *against* sowing it. If you carry the motion that a Bill be read a second time this day six months, you have thrown it out.

ESSAY XXVI. OF SEEMING WISE.

IT hath been an opinion, that the French are wiser than they seem, and the Spaniards seem wiser than they are; but howsoever it be between nations, certainly it is so between man and man; for, as the Apostle saith of godliness, ‘Having a show of godliness, but denying the power thereof,’¹—so, certainly there are, in points of wisdom and sufficiency,² that do nothing or little, very solemnly, *Magno conatu nugas*.³ It is a ridiculous thing, and fit for a satire to persons of judgment, to see what shifts these formalists have, and what prospectives⁴ to make superficies to seem body that hath depth and bulk. Some are so close and reserved, as they will not show their wares but by a dark light, and seem always to keep back somewhat; and when they know within themselves they speak of that they do not well know, would nevertheless seem to others to know of that which they may not well speak. Some help themselves with countenance and gesture, and are wise by signs; as Cicero saith of Piso,⁵ that when he answered him he fetched one of his brows up to his forehead, and bent the other down to his chin; ‘Respondes, altero ad frontem sublato, altero ad mentum depresso supercilio, crudelitatem tibi nonplacere.’⁶ Some think to bear⁷ it by speaking a great word, and being peremptory; and go on, and take by admittance that which they cannot make good. Some, whatsoever is beyond their reach, will seem to despise, or make light of it, as impertinent⁸ or curious,⁹ and

¹ 2 Timothy iii. 5.

² Sufficiency. *Ability; adequate power.* ‘Our sufficiency is of God.’—2 Cor. iii. 5.

³ Trifles with great effort.

⁴ Prospectives. *Perspective glasses.*

‘They speke of Alhazen and Vitellon,
Of queinte mirrours, and of prospectives.’—Chaucer.

⁵ In Pis. 6.

⁶ ‘You answer, with one eyebrow up to your forehead and the other down to your chin, that you do not approve of cruelty.’

⁷ Bear. *To manage; to contrive.*

‘We’ll direct her how ’tis best to bear it.’—Shakespeare.

⁸ Impertinent. *Irrelevant.*

‘Without the which, this story
Were most impertinent.’—Shakespeare.

⁹ Curious. *Over-nice.* See page 100.

so would have their ignorance seem judgment. Some are never without a difference,¹ and commonly by amusing men with a subtlety, blanch² the matter ; of whom A. Gellius saith, ‘ *Hominem delirum, qui verborum minutiis rerum frangit pondera.*’³ Of which kind also Plato, in his *Protagoras*,⁴ bringeth in Prodicus in scorn, and maketh him make a speech that consisteth of distinctions from the beginning to the end. Generally, such men, in all deliberations, find ease to be of the negative side, and affect a credit to object and foretell difficulties ; for when propositions are denied, there is an end of them ; but if they be allowed, it requireth a new work ; which false point of wisdom is the bane of business. To conclude, there is no decaying merchant, or inward beggar,⁵ hath so many tricks to uphold the credit of their wealth, as these empty persons have to maintain the credit of their sufficiency. Seeming wise men may make shift to get opinion ; but let no man chuse them for employment ; for, certainly, you were better take for business a man somewhat absurd than over-formal.

ANNOTATIONS.

‘ *Some help themselves with countenance and gesture.*’

Cowper in his *Conversation* has well described a man of this class :—

‘ A shallow brain behind a serious mask,
An Oracle within an empty cask,
The solemn fop ; significant and budge ;
A fool with judges, amongst fools a judge ;

¹ Difference. *A subtle distinction.*

² Blanch. *To evade.* ‘ A man horribly cheats his own soul, who upon any pretence whatever, or under any temptation, forsakes or *blanches* the true principles of religion.’—Goodman’s *Conference*.

³ ‘ A senseless man who fritters away weighty matters by trifling with words.’ (This expression not in Aulus Gellius. A passage like it occurs in Quintilian—ix. 1.)

⁴ Plato, *Protag.* i. 337.

⁵ Inward beggar. *One secretly a bankrupt.*

‘ To the sight unfold
His secret gems, and all the *inward gold.*’—Lansdowne.

He says but little, and that little said,
Owes all its weight, like loaded dice, to lead.
His wit invites you by his looks, to come,
But when you knock, it never is at home ;
'Tis like a parcel sent you by the stage,
Some handsome present, as your hopes presage ;
'Tis heavy, bulky, and bids fair to prove
An absent friend's fidelity and love ;
But when unpacked, your disappointment groans
To find it stuffed with brickbats, earth, and stones.'

' Seeming wise men may make shift to get opinion.'

There is a way in which some men seem, to themselves, and often to others also, to be much wiser than they are ; by acting as a wise man does, only, on wrong occasions, and altogether under different circumstances. Such a man has heard that it is a wise thing to be neither too daring nor too timid ; neither too suspicious nor too confiding ; too hasty nor too slow, &c., and he ventures and holds back, trusts and distrusts, hastens and delays, spends and spares, &c., just in the same degree that a wise man does,—only, he is venturesome where there is real danger, and cautious where there is none ; hasty where there is no cause, and dilatory when everything turns on dispatch ; trusting those unworthy of confidence, and suspicious of the trustworthy ; parsimonious towards worthy objects, and profuse towards the worthless ; &c.

Such a character may be called ' the *reflection* of a wise man.' He is the figure of a wise man shown by a *mirror* ; which is an exact representation, except that it is *left-handed*.

The German child's-story of *Hans und Grettel*, like many other childish tales, contains, under a surface of mere foolery, an instructive picture of real life. Hans stuck a knife in his sleeve, having been told that was the proper place for the needle ; and put a kid in his pocket, because that was the place for a knife, &c.

It may be said, almost without qualification, that true wisdom consists in the *ready* and *accurate* perception of analogies. Without the former quality, knowledge of the past is uninformative ; without the latter, it is deceptive.

One way in which many a man aims at and pretends to wisdom, who 'has it not in him,' is this: he has heard that 'the *middle course* is always the best;' that '*extremes* are to be avoided,' &c.; and so he endeavours in all cases to keep at an *equal distance* from the most opposite parties. As was observed in 'Annotation' the second on Essay XI., he will never quite agree, nor very widely disagree with either: and thus, as almost always each party is right in *something*, he misses the *truth* on both sides; and while afraid of being guided by either party, he is in fact guided by both. His mimic wisdom consists in sliding alternately towards each extreme. But if your orbit be a true circle, independent of the eccentric elliptical orbits of others, this will make sundry *nodes* with theirs; sometimes falling within and sometimes without the same eccentric orbit. That is, in some points you will approach nearer to the one than to the other; in some you will wholly agree with one party, and in some with another; in some you will differ equally from both; and in some you will even go further from the one party than the opposite one does. For, true wisdom does not depend on another's extravagance and folly. The varieties of human error have no power to fix the exact place of truth.

Another exemplification of the golden mean upon which this seeming wise man prides himself, is the adoption of the conclusion that where a great deal is said, *something* must be true; imagining that he is showing a most judicious and laudable caution in believing only *part* of what is said,—doing what is called 'splitting the difference.' This is the wisdom of the clown, who thinks he has bought a great bargain of a Jew, because he has beat down the price from a guinea to a crown for some article that is not really worth a groat.

Another of these pretenders to being, or being thought to be, wise, prides himself on what he calls his *consistency*,—on his never changing his opinions or plans; which, as long as Man is fallible, and circumstances change, is the wisdom of one either too dull to detect his mistakes, or too obstinate to own them.

Another, having been warned that 'wisdom and wit' are not the same thing, makes it a part of wisdom to distrust everything that can possibly be regarded as witty; not having judg-

ment to perceive the combination, when it occurs, of wit with sound reasoning. The ivy-wreath conceals from his view the point of the Thyrsus. His is not the wisdom that can laugh at what is ludicrous, and, at the same time, preserve a clear discernment of sound and unsound reasoning.

Again—Some of these seeming wise men pride themselves on their scorn for all systematic knowledge, and on their reliance on what they call common sense and experience. They depend on their ‘experience’ and their ‘common sense’ for everything, and are continually obtruding what may be called the pedantry of experience and common sense on the most abstruse subjects. They meet all scientific and logical argument with—‘Common sense tells me I am right,’ and—‘My every-day’s experience confirms me in the opinion I have formed.’ If they are spoken to of Political Economy, they will immediately reply, ‘Ah, I know nothing of the *dreams* of Political Economy’ (this is the very phrase I have heard used)—‘I never studied it—I never troubled myself about it; but there are some points upon which I have made up my mind, such as the question of free trade and protection, and poor-laws.’ ‘I do not profess’—a man will perhaps say—‘to know anything of Medicine, or Pharmacy, or Anatomy, or any of those things; but I know by experience that so and so is wholesome for sick people.’

In former times men knew by experience that the earth stands still, and the sun rises and sets. Common sense taught them that there could be no antipodes, since men could not stand with their heads downwards, like flies on the ceiling. Experience taught the King of Bantam that water can never become solid. And—to come to the case of human affairs—the experience and common sense of the most intelligent of the Roman historians, Tacitus, taught him that for a mixed government to be established, combining the elements of royalty, aristocracy, and democracy, would be next to impossible; and that if it were established, it must speedily be dissolved. Yet, had he lived to the present day, he would have learned that the establishment and continuance of such a form of government was not impossible. So much for experience! The experience of these wise men resembles the learning of a man who has turned over the pages of a great many

books without ever having learned to read ; and their so-called 'common sense' is often, in reality, nothing else than common prejudice.

Yet these very persons pass for wise, or, as Bacon expresses it, 'get opinion,' by the oracular decisions they are continually pronouncing on the most difficult scientific questions. For instance, decisions on questions concerning taxation, tithes, the national debt, the poor-laws, the wages which labourers earn or ought to earn, the comparative advantages of different modes of charity, and numberless other questions of Political Economy, are boldly pronounced by them, while not only ignorant, but *professedly* ignorant, and designing to continue so, of the whole subject : neither having, nor pretending to have, nor seeking for, any fixed principles by which to regulate their judgment on each point. That gentleman equals them in wisdom, while certainly surpassing them in the modesty of his doubt, who, on being asked whether he could play on the violin, made answer that he really did not know whether he could or not, because he had never tried.

It is somewhat remarkable that this claim to be thought wise, founded on the adherence to so-called common sense, should be so generally allowed as it is. For it not consistent with the universal, though unconscious, and often unwilling, testimony of mankind—that systematic knowledge is preferable to conjectural judgments, and that common sense is only our *second-best* guide. This testimony is borne in the fact that the sailor, the architect, the physician, and every other practitioner, each in his own department, gives the preference to unassisted common sense only in those points where he himself has nothing else to trust to, and invariably resorts to the rules of art wherever he possesses the knowledge of them.¹ But most people are apt to give credit for wisdom to those, not whose views are, on the whole, most reasonable, but those whose common *sense* consists in common notions, and who are free from all errors, *except vulgar errors*.

Another mode in which men set up for being wise is, by being fastidious. They are so excessively acute at detecting imperfections, that in looking at a peacock's train, they would

¹ See *Elements of Logic*, Preface, p. xv.

fix on every spot where the feathers were worn, or the colours faded, and see nothing else.

Again—It is a characteristic of some of these seeming wise men, that not only are ‘little things great’ to them, as the poet says they are to ‘little men,’ but great things are little to them.

With writers of the ‘seeming-wise’ class, it is the commonest artifice to adopt that style of mysterious grandiloquence which was adverted to in the Preface to this volume. Let a writer on science—suppose, Logic, or Metaphysics—bring forward what knowledge he does possess, in dark hints, insinuating that he has a vast store of wisdom unrevealed, and that great discoveries may be expected, some day or other, from himself or some of his disciples, when the world is ripe for them; and let him speak of all other writers on the subject with insolent contempt; and it is likely that a large portion of that numerous class, the credulous, will give him credit for being a great philosopher.

Such persons may remind one of a story told of a certain Banker who bequeathed to his son a flourishing business, together with a large and very strong iron chest, securely locked, and which had always been supposed full of gold. ‘To tell you the truth,’ said he, ‘the chest is *empty*: but if you *keep the secret*, the secret *will keep you*.’

As to this, and other tricks by which men (in the modern phrase) ‘puff themselves,’ they might have been introduced by Bacon in the essay ‘On Cunning.’ But it is worth noticing, that those who assume an imposing demeanour, and seek to puff themselves off for something beyond what they are (and often succeed), are, not unfrequently, as much *under-rated* by some, as they are *over-rated* by others. For, as a man (according to what Bacon says in the essay ‘On Discourse’) by keeping back some knowledge which he is believed to possess, may gain credit for knowing something of which he is really ignorant, so, if he is once or twice detected in pretending to know what he does not, he is likely to be set down as a *mere* pretender, and as ignorant of what he does know.

‘Silver gilt will often pass
Either for gold or else for brass.’¹

¹ See *Proverbs and Precepts*, as Copy-pieces for National Schools.

'You were better take for business a man somewhat absurd than over-formal.'

By 'absurd' Bacon probably means what we express by 'inconsiderate'; what the French call 'étourdi.'¹

The 'over-formal' often impede, and sometimes frustrate, business by a dilatory, tedious, circuitous, and (what in colloquial language is called) fussy way of conducting the simplest transactions. They have been compared to a dog, which cannot lie down till he has made three circuits round the spot.

¹ See Essay XLVII.

ESSAY XXVII. OF FRIENDSHIP.

IT had been hard for him that spake it, to have put more truth and untruth together in few words, than in that speech, 'Whosoever is delighted in solitude, is either a wild beast or a god ;'¹ for it is most true, that a natural and secret hatred and aversation towards² society, in any man, hath somewhat of the savage beast ; but it is most untrue, that it should have any character at all of the divine nature, except³ it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for a higher conversation ;⁴ such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathens—as Epimenides, the Candian ; Numa, the Roman ; Empedocles, the Sicilian ; and Apollonius, of Tyana ; and truly, and really, in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the Church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth ; for a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no lovè. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little : 'Magna civitas, magna solitudo,'⁵—because in a great town friends are scattered, so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighbourhoods. But we may go farther, and affirm most truly, that it is a mere⁶ and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness ; and, even in this scene also of solitude, whosoever, in the frame of his nature and affections, is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.⁷

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fulness of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause

¹ Aristotle, *Eth.* B. 8.

² Aversation towards. *Aversion to.* 'There is such a general *aversation* in human nature towards contempt, that there is scarcely anything more exasperating.'—*Government of the Tongue.*

³ Except. *Unless.* 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'—*John* iii. 3.

⁴ Conversation. *Course of life.* 'What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy *conversation* and godliness.'—*2 Pet.* iii.

⁵ 'A great city, a great solitude.'

⁶ Mere. *Absolute.* See 'Merely,' page 25.

⁷ Humanity. *Human nature.* 'Look to thyself ; reach not beyond *humanity.*'—*Sir Philip Sidney.*

and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body; and it is not much otherwise in the mind: you may take sarza¹ to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flower of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum for the brain; but no receipt openeth the heart but a true friend, to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak,—so great, as² they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness: for princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit, except, to make themselves capable thereof, they raise some persons to be as it were companions, and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth³ to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of favourites, or privadoes,—as if it were matter of grace or conversation; but the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them ‘*participes curarum*’;⁴ for it is that which tieth the knot: and we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned, who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants, whom both themselves have called friends, and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner, using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey, after surnamed the Great, to that height that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla’s over-match; for when he had carried the consulship for a friend of his, against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent thereat, and began to speak great, Pompey turned upon him again, and in effect bade him be quiet; for that more men adored the sun rising than the sun

¹ Sarza. *Sarsaparilla*. ‘Sarza is both a tree and an herb.’—*Ainsworth*.

² As. *That*. See page 26.

³ Sorteth. *To result; to issue in*.

‘Sort how it will,
I shall have gold for all.’—*Shakespeare*.

⁴ ‘Participators in our cares.’

setting.¹ With Julius Cæsar, Decimus Brutus had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament for heir in remainder after his nephew; and this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to his death; for when Cæsar would have discharged the senate, in regard of some ill presages, and especially a dream of Calpurnia, this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his chair, telling him he hoped he would not dismiss the senate till his wife had dreamed a better dream;² and it seemed his favour was so great, as Antonius, in a letter, which is recited verbatim in one of Cicero's Philippics, called him '*venefica*,' witch,—as if he had enchanted Cæsar.³ Augustus raised Agrippa, though of mean birth, to that height, as,⁴ when he consulted with Mæcenas about the marriage of his daughter Julia, Mæcenas took the liberty to tell him, that he must either marry his daughter to Agrippa, or take away his life,—there was no third way, he had made him so great. With Tiberius Cæsar, Sejanus had ascended to that height as they two were termed and reckoned as a pair of friends. Tiberius, in a letter to him, saith, '*Hæc pro amicitia nostra non occultavi*;⁵ and the whole senate dedicated an altar to Friendship, as to a goddess, in respect of the great dearness⁶ of friendship between them two. The like, or more, was between Septimus Severus and Plautianus; for he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plautianus, and would often maintain Plautianus in doing affronts to his son; and did write also, in a letter to the senate, by these words,⁷ 'I love the man so well, as I wish he may over-live⁸ me.' Now, if these princes had been as a Trajan, or a Marcus Aurelius, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of⁹ an abundant goodness of nature: but being men so wise, of such strength and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers of themselves, as all these were, it proveth, most plainly, that they found their own felicity, though as great as ever happened to mortal men, but as a half piece, except they might

¹ Plut. *Vit. Pomp.* 19.

² Plut. *Vit. J. Cæs.* 64.

³ Cic. *Philip.* xiii. II.

⁴ As. *That.* See page 26.

⁵ 'On account of our friendship, I have not concealed these things.'—Tacit.

Ann. iv. 40.

⁶ Dearness. *Fondness.* 'He must profess all the *dearness* and friendship.'—*South.*

⁷ *Dion Cass.* lxxv.

⁸ Overlive. *Survive.* 'Musidorus, who showed a mind not to *overlive* Prorus, prevailed.'—*Sir P. Sidney.*

⁹ Of. *From.* See page 286.

have a friend to make it entire; and yet, which¹ is more, they were princes that had wives, sons, nephews, yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten what Comineus observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy—namely, that he would communicate² his secrets with none; and, least of all, those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on, and saith, that towards his latter time, that closeness did impair and a little perish³ his understanding. Surely Comineus might have made the same judgment also, if it had pleased him, of his second master, Louis XI., whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras is dark, but true, ‘Cor ne edito’—eat not the heart.⁴ Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto, are cannibals of their own hearts. But one thing is most admirable (wherewith I will conclude this first fruit of friendship), which is, that this communicating of a man’s self to his friend, works two contrary effects, for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves; for there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more, and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is, in truth, of operation upon a man’s mind of like virtue as the alchymists use to attribute to their stone for man’s body, that it worketh all contrary effects, but still to the good and benefit of nature. But yet, without praying in aid⁵ of alchymists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature; for, in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action, and, on the other side, weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression—and even so is it of⁶ minds.

¹ Which. *What.*—Chaucer.

² Communicate *with.* *Communicate to; impart to.* ‘He communicated those thoughts only *with* the Lord Digby.’—Clarendon.

³ Perish. *To cause to decay: to destroy.*

‘Thy flinty heart, more hard than they,
Might in thy palace *perish*, Margaret.’—Shakespeare.

⁴ Plutarch, *De Educat. Puer.* 17.

⁵ Pray in aid. *To be an advocate for.* (A term in law for calling in one to help who has interest in a cause.)

‘You shall find
A conqueror that will *pray in aid* for kindness,
When he for grace is kneeled to.’—Shakespeare.

⁶ Of. *With regard to.*

‘This quarrel is not now of fame and tribute,
But for your own republick.’—Ben Jonson.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections; for friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections from storm and tempests, but it maketh daylight in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts. Neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is, that whosoever¹ hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up, in the communicating and discoursing with another; he tosseth his thoughts more easily—he marshalleth them more orderly—he seeth how they look when they are turned into words—finally, he waxeth² wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles to the king of Persia, 'That speech was like cloth of Arras, opened and put abroad'³—whereby the imagery doth appear in figure, whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs. Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained⁴ only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel (they indeed are best), but even without that a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were⁵ better relate himself to a statue or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.⁶

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point which lieth more open, and falleth within

¹ Whosoever. *Whoever*. 'Whosoever hath Christ for his friend shall be sure of counsel; and whosoever is his own friend will be sure to obey it.'—*South*.

² Wax. *To grow; to become*.

'Nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk; but as this temple *waxes*,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal.'—*Shakespeare*.

³ Plut. *Vit. Themist.* 28.

⁴ Restrained. *Limited; confined; restricted*. 'Upon what ground can a man promise himself a future repentance who cannot promise himself a futurity; whose life is so *restrained* to the present that it cannot secure to itself the reversion of the very next moment.'—*South*.

⁵ Were. *Had*.

'I were best not call.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁶ Smother (not used as a noun.) *A state of being stifled*.

'Then must I from the smoke into the *smother*;
From tyrant duke unto a tyrant brother.'—*Shakespeare*.

vulgar¹ observation—which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heraclitus saith well, in one of his enigmas, ‘Dry light is ever the best;’² and certain it is, that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment, which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer; for there is no such flatterer as is a man’s self, and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man’s self as the liberty of a friend. Counsel is of two sorts; the one concerning manners, the other concerning business: for the first, the best preservative to keep the mind in health is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling of a man’s self to a strict account is a medicine sometimes too piercing and corrosive; reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead; observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case; but the best receipt (best, I say, to work, and best to take) is the admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many (especially of the greater sort) do commit, for want of a friend to tell them of them, to the great damage both of their fame and fortune: for, as St. James³ saith, they are as men ‘that look sometimes into a glass, and presently forget their own shape and favour.’⁴ As for business, man may think, if he will, that two eyes see no more than one; or, that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on; or, that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four-and-twenty letters; or, that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest; and such other fond⁵ and high imaginations, to think himself all in all: but when all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight; and if any man think that he will take counsel, but it shall be by pieces;

¹ Vulgar. *Common; general; public.*

‘Most sure, and *vulgar*; every one hears that.’—*Shakespeare.*

² *Ap. Stob. Serm. v. 120.*

³ *James i. 23.*

⁴ Favour. *Countenance.* ‘I have surely seen him; his *favour* is familiar to me.’

⁵ Fond. *Foolish; silly; weak.*

‘’Tis *fond* to wail inevitable strokes,
As ’tis to laugh at them.’—*Shakespeare.*

asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man ; it is as well (that is to say, better, perhaps, than if he asked none at all), but he runneth two dangers ; one, that he shall not be faithfully counselled—for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked¹ to some ends which he hath that giveth it ; the other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe (though with good meaning), and mixed partly of mischief and partly of remedy—even as if you would call a physician, that is thought good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body,—and therefore, may put you in a way for present cure, but overthroweth your health in some other kind, and so cure the disease, and kill the patient : but a friend, that is wholly acquainted with a man's estate,² will beware, by furthering any present business, how he dasheth upon other inconvenience. And, therefore, rest not upon scattered counsels, for they will rather distract and mislead than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship (peace in the affections, and support of the judgment), followeth the last fruit, which is, like the pomegranate, full of many kernels—I mean, aid and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here, the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship, is to cast and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself ; and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients, to say ‘ that a friend is another himself,’ for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times in desire of some things which they principally take to heart ; the bestowing of a child, the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend, he may rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him ; so that a man hath, as it were, two lives in his desires. A man hath a body, and that body is confined to a place ; but where friendship is, all offices of life are, as it were, granted to him and his deputy ; for he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there which a man cannot, with any

¹ Crook. *To pervert.* See page 254.

² Estate. *State ; condition ; circumstances.*

‘ His letter there

Will show you his estate.’—*Shakespeare.*

face or comeliness, say or do himself? A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less extol them; a man cannot sometimes stoop to supplicate or beg, and a number of the like: but all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own. So, again, a man's person hath many proper¹ relations which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son but as a father; to his wife but as a husband; to his enemy but upon terms: whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth² with the person. But to enumerate these things were endless: I have given the rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part, if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage.

ANTITHETA ON FRIENDSHIP.

PRO.

'Pessima solitudo, non veras habere amicitias.

'The worst solitude is to have no real friendships.'

'Digna malæ fidei ultio, amicitiiis privari.

'To be deprived of friends is a fit reward of faithlessness.'

CONTRA.

'Qui amicitias arctas copulat, novas necessitates sibi imponit.

'He who forms close friendships, imposes on himself new duties.'

'Animi imbecilli est, partiri fortunam.

'It is the mark of a feeble mind to go shares in one's fortune with another.'

ANNOTATIONS.

*'It had been hard for him that spake it to have put more truth and untruth together in few words than in that speech,—
'Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god.'*

Aristotle had been so unduly and absurdly worshipped before Bacon's time, that it was not inexcusable to be carried away by the ebb-tide, and unduly to disparage him. But, in truth, Aristotle

¹ Proper. *Peculiar.*

'Faults proper to himself.'—*Shakespeare.*

² Sort. *To suit; to fit.*

*'For different styles with different subjects sort,
As several garbs with country, town, and court.'*—*Pope.*

(for it is of him Bacon is speaking) was quite right in saying that to Man, such as Man is, friendship is indispensable to happiness; and that one who has no need, and feels no need of it, must be either much *above* human nature, or much below it.¹ Aristotle does not presume to say that no Being can exist so exalted as to be wholly independent of all other Beings, and to require no sympathy, nor admit of it; but that such a Being must be a widely different Being from Man.

‘It is most untrue, that it should have any character at all of divine nature.’

Well might Bacon doubt, or deny, that incapacity for friendship could assimilate Man to the divine nature. We do not find that true Christians—those whom Peter describes as ‘partakers of a divine nature through the great and precious promises given unto them’²—become less and less capable of friendship in proportion as they, in any measure, attain to that resemblance to their divine Master, which is yet to be their perfection and their happiness, when they ‘shall see Him as He is,’³ and after which they are now, here below, continually striving. We do not find that, as they increase in universal charity, particular friendships are swallowed up in it, or that any progress to higher and more exalted christian attainment makes a partial regard towards one good man more than another, unworthy of them, and too narrow a feeling for them to entertain. Far from it, indeed: it is generally observed, on the contrary, that the best Christians, and the fullest, both of *brotherly* love towards all ‘who are of the *household of faith*,’ and of universal tenderness and benevolence towards all their *fellow-creatures*, are also the warmest and steadiest in their friendships.

Nor have we any reason to believe that in the future state of blessedness and glory, when the saint is indeed made perfect, any part of his perfection will consist in being no longer capable of special individual friendship. There are many persons, however, who believe that it will be so; and this is one of the

¹ ‘Ο δὲ μὴ δυνάμενος κοινωνεῖν ἢ μηθὲν δεόμενος δι’ αὐτάρκειαν, οὐθὲν μέρος πόλεως· ὥστε ἢ θηρίον ἢ θεός.’—Arist. *Politics*, Book i. Bacon probably quoted from a Latin translation: ‘Homo solitarius, aut Deus aut bestia.’

² 2 *Pet.* i. 4.

³ 1 *John* iii. 2.

many points in which views of the eternal state of the heirs of salvation are rendered more uninteresting to our feelings, and consequently, more uninviting, than there is any need to make them. Many suppose that when we have attained to that eternal state, the more concentrated and limited affection will be lost in brotherhood with that ‘multitude which no man can number, redeemed out of every nation, and kindred, and people.’ But if we find, as we do find, that private friendship does not interfere with christian brotherhood, nor with universal benevolence, on earth, why should it do so in heaven?

But ‘we have more decisive proof than this:’¹ no one can suppose that a Christian in his glorified state will be *more* exalted than his great Master while here on earth; from Him we must ever remain at an immeasurable distance: we hope, indeed, to be free from the sufferings of our blessed Lord in his state of humiliation here below; but never to equal his perfections. Yet He was not incapable of friendship. He certainly loved, indeed, all mankind, more than any other man ever did; since (as Paul says) ‘while we were yet enemies, He died for us;’ He loved especially the disciples who constantly followed Him; but even among the Apostles, He distinguished one as more peculiarly and privately his *friend*—John was ‘the *disciple whom Jesus loved.*’ Can *we* then ever be too highly exalted to be capable of friendship?

‘I am convinced, on the contrary, that the extension and perfection of friendship will constitute great part of the future happiness of the blest. Many have lived in various and distant ages and countries, perfectly adapted (I mean not merely in their being generally estimable, but in the agreement of their tastes, and suitableness of dispositions) for friendship with each other, but who, of course, could never meet in this world. Many a one selects, when he is reading history,—a truly pious Christian, most especially in reading sacred history,—some one or two favourite characters, with whom he feels that a personal acquaintance would have been peculiarly delightful to him. Why should not such a desire be realized in a future state? A wish to see and personally know, for example, the Apostle Paul, or John, is the most likely to arise in the noblest and purest mind;

¹ From *A View of the Scripture Revelations of a Future State.*

I should be sorry to think such a wish absurd and presumptuous, or unlikely to be gratified. The highest enjoyment, doubtless, to the blest, will be the personal knowledge of their divine and beloved Master; yet I cannot but think that some part of their happiness will consist in an intimate knowledge of the greatest of his followers also; and of those of them in particular whose peculiar qualities are, to each, the most peculiarly attractive.

‘In this world, again, our friendships are limited not only to those who live in the same age and country, but to a small portion even of those who are not unknown to us, and whom we know to be estimable and amiable, and who, we feel, might have been among our dearest friends. Our command of time and leisure to cultivate friendships, imposes a limit to their extent; they are bounded rather by the occupation of our thoughts, than of our *affections*. And the removal of such impediments in a better world, seems to me a most desirable, and a most probable change.

‘I see no reason, again, why those who *have been* dearest friends on earth, should not, when admitted to that happy state, continue to be so, with full knowledge and recollection of their former friendship. If a man is still to continue (as there is every reason to suppose) a social Being, and capable of friendship, it seems contrary to all probability that he should cast off or forget his former friends, who are partakers with him of the like exaltation. He will, indeed, be greatly changed from what he was on earth, and unfitted perhaps for friendship with such a Being as one of us is now; but his friend will have undergone (by supposition) a corresponding change.¹ And as we have seen those who have been loving playfellows in childhood, grow up, if they grow up with good, and with like, dispositions, into still closer friendship in riper years, so also it is probable that when *this* our state of *childhood* shall be perfected, in the maturity of a better world, the like attachment will continue

¹ The same thought is beautifully expressed by one of the most excellent of sacred poets,—the author of *The Christian Year* :—

‘That so, before the Judgment-seat,
Though changed and glorified each face,
Not unremember’d we may meet,
For endless ages to embrace.’

between those companions who have trod together the christian path to Glory, and have 'taken sweet counsel together, and walked in the house of God as friends.' A change to indifference towards those who have fixed their hearts on the same objects with ourselves during this earthly pilgrimage, and have given and received mutual aid during their course, is a change as little, I trust, to be expected, as it is to be desired. It certainly is not such a change as the Scriptures teach us to prepare for.

'And a belief that, under such circumstances, our earthly attachments will remain, is as beneficial as it is reasonable. It is likely very greatly to influence our choice of friends; which surely is no small matter. A sincere Christian would not indeed be, at any rate, utterly careless whether those were sincere Christians also, with whom he connected himself: but his care is likely to be much greater, if he hopes, that, provided he shall have selected such as are treading the same path, and if he shall have studied to promote their eternal welfare, he shall meet again, never to part more, those to whom his heart is most engaged here below. The hope also of rejoining in a better state, the friend whom he sees advancing towards that state, is an additional spur to his own virtuous exertions. Everything which can make heaven appear more desirable, is a help towards his progress in christian excellence; and as one of the greatest of earthly enjoyments to the best and most exalted Christian, is to witness the happiness of a friend, so, one of the brightest of his hopes will be, that of exulting in the most perfect happiness of those most dear to him.

'As for the grief, which a man may be supposed to feel, for the loss—the total and final loss—of some who may have been dear to him on earth, as well as of vast multitudes, I fear, of his fellow-creatures, I have only this to remark: that a wise, and good man in this life, though he never ceases to use his endeavours to reclaim the wicked, and to diminish *every* kind of evil and suffering, yet, in cases where it is clear that no good can be done by him, strives, as far as possible (though often without much success), to *withdraw* his thoughts from evil which he cannot lessen, but which still, in spite of his efforts, will often cloud his mind. We *cannot* at pleasure draw off our thoughts entirely from painful subjects which it is in vain to meditate

about. The power to do this completely, when we will, would be a great increase of happiness; and this power, therefore, it is reasonable to suppose the blessed will possess in the world to come—that they will occupy their minds entirely with the thoughts of things agreeable, and in which their exertions can be of service; and will be able, by an effort of the will, completely to banish and exclude every idea that might alloy their happiness.’

‘*A desire to sequester a man’s self for a higher conversation such as is found . . . really and truly in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the Church.*’

Bacon here seems to agree in that commendation of a monastic life which is sometimes heard even now from Protestants. On this subject I take leave to quote a passage from the *Cautions for the Times*.

‘The monks are represented by Roman-catholic writers as all pious men, who, bent upon the cultivation of a religious temper of mind, withdrew from the world for that purpose; as if the business and duties of this world were not the very discipline which God has appointed for cultivating real righteousness in us. And then, the learning, peace, and piety of the monasteries is strongly contrasted with the ignorance and irreligion and perpetual wars, of the dark and troublous times, which are commonly called ‘the middle ages,’ in such a manner that even Protestants are sometimes led to think and say that, at least in former times, and *for* those times, the monasteries were commendable institutions. But they forget that it was the very system of which these were a part, which *made* the world so dark and unquiet; and then, like the ivy which has reduced a fine building to a shattered ruin, they held together the fragments of that ruin.

‘Of course, if you teach men that holiness can be only, or can be best attained by withdrawing from the world into a cloister, all those who are bent on living a holy life *will* withdraw from the world; and they will, in so withdrawing, take from the world that which should reform it—the benefit of their teaching, and the encouragement of their example. One after another all those most promising men, who should have been, each in

the place where Providence had set him, 'the light of the world,' and 'the salt of the earth,' will leave the station to which God had called them, and seclude themselves within the walls of a monastery; and then, in proportion as the influence of good men is removed more and more, society will become every day worse and worse. The business and pleasures of the world will be looked upon as necessarily sinful, and those who mix in them as necessarily unholy; and the thought of using them as a discipline in godliness, and learning how to 'use this world without abusing it,' will be lost out of men's minds; till at last, by the working of such a system, all appearance of piety will really be confined to the monasteries, and the common state of society, and the ordinary course of life, will be tainted with impurity, and disturbed by violence, and the world will seem again, as it did in heathen times, to 'lie in wickedness.' When the SALT is thus drawn away from the mass, and collected to particular spots, the remainder is left to putrefy.

'Let us illustrate this by an example. Some, even Englishmen, who have visited Slave-States, are satisfied at being told that the slaves are far better off and more civilized there than in their own barbarian countries; which is, probably, for the most part true. But *why* have the African countries continued so long in gross barbarism? They have long had intercourse with Europeans, who might have taught them to raise sugar and cotton, &c., at home, for the European markets, and in other ways might have civilized them. And it cannot be said that they are incapable of learning; since free negroes in various countries, though they have the disadvantage of being a degraded caste, are yet (however inferior to us) far advanced beyond the savage tribes of Africa.

'But it is the very *slave-trade itself* that has kept them barbarians, by encouraging wars for the purpose of taking captives to be sold as slaves, and the villanous practices of kidnapping, and trading in each other's happiness and liberties. It is the very system itself, which men seek to excuse by pointing out the comfortable state of slaves when they are caught and sold, that, to a great extent, produces, and must, if persisted in, perpetuate, the barbarous condition with which this comparative comfort is contrasted. The whole of these African tribes might, under a better system, have enjoyed in freedom, far, very far,

greater comfort in their native land, than that which *some* of them now possess, as slaves, in a foreign land.

‘So, also, in the case of the monasteries. Those who shut themselves up there might have exercised a much better and more rational piety (like the Apostles and first Christians) out of them, and in the world; and if they had lived amongst their fellow-men, would have helped to raise the whole tone of society around them. And it was just the same evil system which buried some good men (like lamps in sepulchres) in the cells of monasteries, and made the general mass of society outside the walls of those establishments so bad, that it seemed to excuse their withdrawal from it.

‘It is to be acknowledged, indeed, that some monks sometimes did some good for the rest of the world. They were often engaged in education, attendance on the poor, copying of manuscripts, agriculture, &c., and all these were really *useful* occupations. It is not to these things we object, when we object to monasteries; for with monasteries these have no necessary connexion.

‘Let associations be formed for a good object, when needful; instead of first forming an association as an end in itself, and *then* looking out for *something* for it to do; else, that something, being a secondary matter, will sometimes be ill done, or neglected, and sometimes will be what had better be left undone.’

‘There is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer. For there is no such flatterer as a man’s self.’

I have already remarked, in the notes on ‘Truth,’ that men are in danger of exercising on themselves, when under the influence of some passion, a most pernicious oratorical power, by pleading the cause, as it were, each, before himself, of that passion. Suppose it anger, for instance, that he is feeling; he is naturally disposed to dwell on, and amplify the aggravating circumstances of the supposed provocation, so as to make out a good case for himself. This of course tends to *heighten* his resentment, and to satisfy him that he ‘doth well to be angry;’

or perhaps to persuade him that he is *not* angry, but is a model of patience under intolerable wrongs. And the like takes place, if it be selfish cupidity, unjust partiality, party-spirit, or any other passion that may be operating. For, universally, men are but too apt to take more pains in justifying their propensities, than it would cost to control them.

But besides the danger of self-deceit, when under the immediate influence of a passion, many a man deceives himself as to what really are his own natural tendencies. For instance, one who is somewhat inclined to the love of money may fancy himself remarkably liberal; because every act of liberality will have cost him such an effort, that he will think much of it, as a most heroic sacrifice. A man, again, who has much self-esteem, may fancy himself peculiarly modest and humble, because he will view, as it were, through a magnifying-glass any act of condescension, and will seem to himself to be lowering his own just pretensions, when he is taking upon himself less than he thinks he has a fair claim to, though, in reality, more than is right. And so in other cases.

Now, as the advice of a good physician may be of use in helping us to understand our own bodily constitution, so a judicious friend, a wise and candid counsellor, may perform a like service in the important point of self-knowledge, and help to guard us against this kind of self-deceit. It is said that, according to the Hindu law, the penalty denounced against a breach of conjugal fidelity is remitted only in case of the inducement to its commission having been the *present of an elephant*,—this being considered a *douceur* too magnificent for any one to be expected to refuse. Now, in Europe, though an actual elephant is not the very thing that offers the strongest temptation, there is in most people's conscience something analogous to it; and different things are 'elephants' to different people. Happy is that man who has a faithful friend to remind him to be on the look-out for, and to help him to discover, his 'elephant.'

'Observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case.'

It will always be improper for our case, unless we make the right use of such observation,—which is, so to estimate the

temptations of others that we may the better understand our own.

‘How is it, men, when they in judgment sit
On the same faults, now censure, now acquit?
'Tis not that they are to the error blind,
But that a different object fills the mind.
Judging of others, we can see too well
Their grievous fall; but not, how grieved they fell:
Judging ourselves, we to our minds recall,
Not how we fell, but how we grieved to fall.’¹

But though ten thousand of the greatest faults in others are, to us, of less consequence than one small fault in ourselves, yet self-approval is so much more agreeable to us than self-examination—which, as Bacon says, ‘is a medicine sometimes too piercing and corrosive,’—that we are more ready to examine our neighbours than ourselves, and to rest satisfied with finding, or fancying, that we are better than they; forgetting that, even if it really is so, *better* does not always imply *good*; and that our course of duty is not like a race which is won by him who runs, however slowly, if the rest are still slower. It is this forgetfulness that causes bad examples to do much the greatest amount of evil among those who do *not* follow them. For, among the four kinds of bad examples that do us harm—namely, those we *imitate*—those we proudly *exult* over—those which drive us into an *opposite* extreme—and those which lower our *standard*,—this last is the most hurtful. For *one* who is corrupted by becoming as bad as a bad example, there are ten that are debased by being content with being better.

But though this observing of faults in another is thus ‘sometimes improper for our case’—and though, at any time, to *dwell* on the faults of another is wrong,—yet in the case of a friend, though not of a stranger, we are perhaps ready to fall into the opposite error, of overlooking them altogether, or of defending them. Now, it is absolutely necessary to perceive and acknowledge them: for, if we think ourselves bound to vindicate them in our friend, we shall not be very likely to condemn them in ourselves. Self-love will, most likely, demand

¹ Crabbe, *Tales of the Hall*.

fair play, and urge that what is right in our friend is not wrong in us ; and we shall have been perverting our own principles of morality ; thus turning the friendship that might yield such ' fair fruit ' into a baneful poison-tree.

' The two noble fruits of friendship (peace in the affections, and support of the judgment) follow the last fruit, which is, like the pomegranate, full of many kernels . . . '

' The manifold use of friendship.'

One of these manifold uses of friendship is, the advantage, not noticed by Bacon, to be derived from a very, very discreet and pure-minded friend ; that you may trust him to *conceal* from you some things which you had better not know. There are cases in which there is an advantage in knowing, and an advantage in not knowing ; and the two cannot of course be combined, except by the thing being known to your other self—your ' alter ipse,'—and kept back from you.

For instance, a man may have done something amiss ; your friend may say to him, ' I have not told my friend of this, and will not, provided you take care to discontinue the practice—to rectify what is done wrong,—to keep clear of any repetition, &c., as the case may be.' And he will be more encouraged to do so if he knows that your estimation of him is not as yet impaired. And yet such a person has need to be carefully looked after ; which of course your friend will take care to do.

And there are other cases also in which such a concealment will be advantageous. But of course one who can be so trusted must be, as has been said, one of consummate wisdom and integrity.

It may be worth noticing as a curious circumstance, when persons past forty before they were at all acquainted, form together a very close intimacy of friendship. For grafts of *old* wood to *take*, there must be a wonderful congeniality between the trees.

ESSAY XXVIII. OF EXPENSE.

RICHES are for spending, and spending for honour and good actions—therefore extraordinary expense must be limited by the worth of the occasion: for voluntary undoing¹ may be as well for a man's country as for the kingdom of heaven; but ordinary expense ought to be limited by a man's estate, and governed with such regard as² it be within his compass; and not subject to deceit and abuse of servants; and ordered to the best show, that the bills may be less than the estimation abroad. Certainly, if a man will keep but of even hand, his ordinary expenses ought to be but to the half of his receipts; and if he think to wax³ rich, but to the third part. It is no baseness for the greatest to descend and look into their own estate. Some forbear it, not upon negligence alone, but doubting⁴ to bring themselves into melancholy, in respect⁵ they shall find it broken: but wounds cannot be cured without searching. He that cannot look into his own estate at all had need both chuse well those whom he employeth, and change them often; for new are more timorous and less subtle. He that can look into his estate but seldom, it behoveth him to turn all to certainties. A man had need, if he be plentiful in some kind of expense, to be as saving again in some other: as, if he be plentiful in diet, to be saving in apparel; if he be plentiful in the hall, to be saving in the stable, and the like; for he that is plentiful in expenses of all kinds, will hardly be preserved from decay. In clearing of a man's estate, he may as well hurt himself in being too sudden as in letting it run on too long; for hasty selling is commonly as disadvantageable⁶ as interest. Besides, he that clears at once will relapse, for, finding himself out of straits, he

¹ Undoing. *Ruin*. 'He that ventures to be a surety for another, ventures undoing for his sake.'—*South*.

² As. *That*. See page 26.

³ Wax. *To grow; to become*. See page 303.

⁴ Doubt. *To fear*.

'I doubt there's deep resentment in his mind.'—*Otway*.

⁵ In respect. *In case*.

⁶ Disadvantageable. *Disadvantageous*. 'The said court had given a very disadvantageable relation of three great farms.'—*Addison*.

will revert to his customs ; but he that cleareth by degrees induceth a habit of frugality, and gaineth as well upon his mind as upon his estate. Certainly, who¹ hath a state to repair may not despise small things : and, commonly, it is less dishonourable to abridge petty charges than to stoop to petty gettings. A man ought warily to begin charges which, once begun, will continue ; but in matters that return not, he may be more magnificent.

ANNOTATIONS.

' Riches are for spending, and spending for honour.'

For those who are above the poorest classes, the heaviest,—or some of the heaviest—expenses are, as Bacon expresses it, ' for honour '—*i.e.* for the display of wealth. We do not, indeed, commonly speak of ' display of wealth ' except when the wealth and the display of it are something unusually great. We speak rather of ' living in a decent, or in a handsome style.' But this does certainly imply the purchase of many articles which we provide ourselves with *because* they are *costly* ;—which are provided in order to be *observed*, and observed *as* costly ; or, which comes to the same thing, because the absence of them would be observed as denoting shabbiness. For instance, a silver watch, or a gilt one, is as *useful* as a gold one ; and beech or cherry-tree makes as useful furniture as mahogany or rosewood. And as for the mere gratification to the eye, of the superior beauty of these latter, this is, to persons of moderate means, no sufficient set-off against the difference of cost. Moreover, a bunch of wild flowers, or a necklace of crab's-eye-seeds, &c., are as pretty to look at, and as becoming, as jewels or coral ; and if these latter were to become equally cheap, some other kind of decoration would be sought for, and prized on account of its known costliness.

For, though people censure any one for making a display *beyond* his station, yet if he falls below it in what are considered

¹ Who. *He who.* See page 100.

the *decencies* of his station, he is considered as either absurdly penurious, or else very poor.

And why, it may be asked, should any one be at all ashamed of this latter,—supposing his poverty is not the result of any misconduct? The answer is, that though poverty is not accounted, by any persons of sense, *disgraceful*, the exposure of it is felt to be a thing *indecent*: and though, accordingly, a right-minded man does not seek to make a *secret* of it, he does not like to expose it, any more than he would to go without clothes.

The Greeks and Romans had no distinct expressions for the ‘disgraceful’ and the ‘indecent:’ ‘turpe’ and *αισχρον* served to express both. And some of the ancient philosophers, especially the Cynics (see Cic. *de Off.*) founded paradoxes on this ambiguity, and thus bewildered their hearers and themselves. For, it is a great disadvantage not to have (as our language has) distinct expressions for things really different.

There are several things, by the way, besides those just attended to, which are of the character of, not disgraceful, but indecent: that is, of the existence of which we are not ashamed, but which we should be ashamed to *obtrude* on any one’s notice: *e.g.* self-love, which is the deliberate desire for one’s own happiness; and regard for the good opinion of others. These are not—when not carried to excess—vices, and consequently are not disgraceful. Any vice, a man wishes to be thought not to *have*; but no one pretends or wishes to be thought wholly destitute of all regard for his own welfare, or for the good opinion of his fellow-creatures. But a man of sense and delicacy keeps these in the background, and, as it were, clothes them; because they become offensive when prominently displayed.

And so it is with poverty. A man of sense is not ashamed of it, or of deliberately confessing it; but he keeps the marks of it out of sight.

These observations a person was making to a friend, who strenuously controverted his views, and could not, or would not, perceive the distinction above pointed out. ‘I, for my part,’ said he, ‘am poor, and I feel no shame at all at its being known. Why, this coat that I now have on, I have had *turned*, because I could not well afford a new one; and I care not who

knows it.' He did not perceive that he had established the very point he was controverting ; for if there had been, in his view, nothing indecent in the display of poverty, he would have worn the coat *without* turning. He might have had it scoured if needful ; but though clean, it would still have looked threadbare ; and he did not like to make this display of poverty.

' Ordinary expense ought to be limited by a man's estate.'

It is of course a great folly—and a very common one,—for a man to impoverish himself by a showy expenditure beyond his means. And it is a minor folly, for him—without out-running—to make a display beyond his station, and to waste money on show such as was not expected of him, when he might, obviously, have found many better uses for it. But when to chuse the time as to each point, would of course be no easy matter.

Perhaps it may be laid down in reference to what may be called *ornamental* expense—anything that is not so strictly required as a *decency*, that you would be censured and ridiculed for being without it,—that you should have such articles only as you can afford, not only to buy, but to *replace* ; supposing them of a perishable nature.

For, the 'honour,' as Bacon calls it, of any display of wealth, consists, surely, in not only *having* such and such articles, but having them without uneasiness ;—without any very anxious care about them. If you have a very fine set of china-ware, and are in a continual apprehension of its being broken, you had better, in point of respectability as well as of comfort, have been content with plain Worcester. If a lady is in a perpetual fever lest some costly veil or gown should be soiled or torn, this indicates that she would have done better to wear a less costly dress. There is something in what is said by little Sandford in the 'Tale,' who preferred a horn cup to one of silver, 'because it never made him uneasy.'

Of course it is not meant that a man should not live in a house such as he could not afford with perfect ease to rebuild if it were burnt down ; or that he ought to be thus prepared to meet with other such extraordinary calamities. But he should be prepared to meet each kind of accident that each kind of

article respectively is *commonly* liable to: *e.g.* glass and porcelain to be broken, trinkets to be dropped and lost, horses to be lamed, &c. If you cannot face the ordinary and average amount of accidents with respect to any such article, or if it is a matter of anxious care and uneasiness, you are better without it. For, this anxious care and uneasiness proves that the expense is a *great* one to *you*. You may indeed conceal this anxious care, and show, externally, a feigned composure and indifference. But then you are undergoing all this uneasiness,—and also all this labour to *hide* this uneasiness,—for the sake of appearing richer than you are. But to one who has no wish of this kind, the proper measure is, with a view to respectability, as well as peace of mind, not what expenses he can afford, but what he can habitually afford without *feeling them* a grievous care.

Of course higher motives come in, when one considers the good that may be done, to our friends and to the poor, by curtailing showy expenditure.

It is wonderful how some people fail to perceive what an absurd and ridiculous figure a man makes who is continually bemoaning the narrowness of his means, and setting forth the hardship of his case in not having a better income, while he is sitting in a room full of inlaid tables, splendid inkstands and boxes, and other costly gewgaws, which it is no discredit at all to be without, and which are thought desirable chiefly as a display of wealth.

‘It is no baseness for the greatest to descend and look into their own estate.’

It is worth remarking, as a curious circumstance, and the reverse of what many would expect, that the expenses called for by a real or *imagined* necessity, of those who have large incomes, are greater in proportion than those of persons with slender means; and that consequently a larger proportion of what are called the rich, are in embarrassed circumstances, than of the poorer. This is often overlooked, because the *absolute number* of those with large incomes is so much less, that, of course, the absolute number of persons under pecuniary difficulties, in the poorer classes, must form a very great majority. But

if you look to the *proportions*, it is quite the reverse. Take the numbers of persons of each amount of income, divided into classes, from £100 per annum up to £100,000 per annum, and you will find the *per centage* of those who are under pecuniary difficulties *continually augmenting* as you go upwards. And when you come to sovereign States, whose revenue is reckoned by millions, you will hardly find *one* that is not deeply involved in debt! So that it would appear that the larger the income, the harder it is to live within it.

Bacon himself affords a most deplorable instance of this. With a very large income, he was involved by his extravagance in such pecuniary difficulties as drove him to practise shameful corruption.

When men of great revenues, whether civil or ecclesiastical, live in the splendour and sensuality of Sardanapalus, they are apt to plead that this is *expected* of them; which may be, perhaps, sometimes true, in the sense that such conduct is anticipated as *probable*; not true, as implying that it is required or approved. I have elsewhere¹ remarked upon this ambiguity in the word 'expect:' but it is worth noticing as sometimes leading, in conjunction with other causes, to a practical bad effect upon this point of expenses as well as upon many others. It is sometimes used in the sense of 'anticipate,' 'calculate on,' &c. (ἐλπίζω), in short, 'consider as *probable*,' sometimes for 'require or demand as reasonable,'—'consider as right' (ἀξιῶ). Thus, I may fairly 'expect' (ἀξιῶ) that one who has received kindness from me, should protect me in distress; yet I may have reason to expect (ἐλπίζειν) that he will not. 'England expects every man to do his duty;' but it would be chimerical to expect,—that is, anticipate—a universal performance of duty. What may reasonably be expected (in one sense of the word), must be precisely the practice of the majority: since it is the majority of instances that constitutes *probability*: what may reasonably be expected (in the other sense), is something much beyond the practice of the generality: as long, at least, as it shall be true, that 'narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it.'

¹ *Elements of Logic*, Appendix.

‘ He that is plentiful in expenses of all kinds will hardly be preserved from decay.’

Obviously true as this is, yet it is apparently completely overlooked by the imprudent spendthrift, who, finding that he is able to afford this, *or* that, *or* the other, expense, forgets that all of them together will ruin him. This is what, in logical language, is called the ‘ Fallacy of Composition.’

ESSAY XXIX. OF THE TRUE GREATNESS OF KINGDOMS AND ESTATES.¹

THE speech of Themistocles, the Athenian, which was haughty and arrogant, in taking so much to himself, had been a grave and wise observation and censure, applied at large to others. Desired at a feast to touch a lute, he said, 'he could not fiddle, but yet he could make a small town a great city.'² These words (holpen³ a little with a metaphor) may express two differing abilities in those that deal in business of estate; for, if a true survey be taken of counsellors and statesmen, there may be found (though rarely) those which can make a small State great, and yet cannot fiddle,—as, on the other side, there will be found a great many that can fiddle very cunningly,⁴ but yet are so far from being able to make a small State great, as⁵ their gift lieth the other way—to bring a great and flourishing estate to ruin and decay. And, certainly, those degenerate arts and shifts, whereby many counsellors and governors gain both favour with their masters and estimation with the vulgar, deserve no better name than fiddling, being things rather pleasing for the time, and graceful to themselves only, than tending to the weal and advancement of the State which they serve. There are also (no doubt) counsellors and governors which may be held sufficient, *negotiis pares* [able to manage affairs], and to keep them from precipices and manifest inconveniences, which, nevertheless, are far from the ability to raise and amplify an estate in power, means, and fortune. But be the workmen what they may be, let us speak of the work—that is, the true greatness of kingdoms and estates, and the means thereof. An argument⁶ fit for great and mighty princes to

¹ Estates. *States*. See page 146.

² Plut. *Vit. Themist.* ad init.

³ Holpen. See page 223.

⁴ Cunningly. *Skilfully*.

'And many bards that to the trembling chord
Can tune their timely voices *cunningly*.'—*Spenser*.

⁵ As. *That*. See page 26.

⁶ Argument. *Subject*.

'Sad task! yet *argument*
Not less, but more, heroic than the wrath
Of stern Achilles.'—*Milton*.

have in their hand ; to the end that neither by over-measuring their forces, they lose themselves in vain enterprises ; nor, on the other side, by undervaluing them, they descend to fearful and pusillanimous counsels.

The greatness of an estate, in bulk and territory, doth fall under measure ; and the greatness of finances and revenue doth fall under computation. The population may appear by musters, and the number and greatness of cities and towns by cards and maps ; but yet there is not anything, amongst civil affairs, more subject to error, than the right valuation and true judgment concerning the power and forces of an estate. The kingdom of heaven is compared, not to any great kernel, or nut, but to a grain of mustard seed ;¹ which is one of the least grains, but hath in it a property and spirit hastily to get up and spread. So are there States great in territory, and yet not apt to enlarge or command : and some that have but a small dimension of stem, and yet are apt² to be the foundation of great monarchies.

Walled towns, stored arsenals and armories, goodly races of horse, chariots of war, elephants, ordnance, artillery, and the like—all this is but a sheep in a lion's skin, except the breed and disposition of the people be stout and warlike.

Nay, number (itself) in armies importeth³ not much, where the people are of weak courage ; for, as Virgil saith, ‘ It never troubles the wolf how many the sheep be.’⁴ The army of the Persians, in the plains of Arbela, was such a vast sea of people, as it did somewhat astonish the commanders in Alexander's army, who came to him, therefore, and wished him to set upon them by night ; but he answered, ‘ He would not pilfer the victory’⁵—and the defeat was easy. When Tigranes, the Armenian, being encamped upon a hill with four hundred thousand men, discovered the army of the Romans, being not above fourteen thousand, marching towards him, he made himself merry with it, and said, ‘ Yonder men are too many for an

¹ *Matt.* xiii. 31.

² Apt. *Qualified for ; adapted to.* ‘ All that were strong and apt for war.’—

³ *Kings.*

⁴ Import. *To be of importance.* See page 24.

⁵ Virgil, *Ecl.* vii. 51.

⁶ *A. L. I.* vii. 11.

ambassage,¹ and too few for a fight ;' but before the sunset, he found them enow² to give him the chase with infinite slaughter.³ Many are the examples of the great odds between number and courage ; so that a man may truly make a judgment, that the principal point of greatness, in any State, is to have a race of military men. Neither is money the sinews of war (as it is trivially said), where the sinews of men's arms in base and effeminate people are failing ; for Solon said well to Cræsus (when in ostentation he showed him his gold), ' Sir, if any other come that hath better iron than you, he will be master of all this gold.' Therefore, let any prince, or State, think soberly⁴ of his forces, except his militia of natives be of good and valiant soldiers ; and let princes, on the other side, that have subjects of martial disposition, know their own strength, unless they be otherwise wanting unto themselves. As for mercenary forces (which is the help in this case), all examples show that, whatsoever estate or prince doth rest upon them, he may spread his feathers for a time, but he will mew them soon after.

The blessing of Judas and Issachar⁵ will never meet ; that the same people or nation, should be both the lion's whelp, and the ass between burdens,—neither will it be, that a people overlaid with taxes, should ever become valiant and martial. It is true, that taxes, levied by consent of the estate, do abate men's courage less, as it hath been seen notably⁶ in the excises of the Low Countries, and, in some degree, in the subsidies of England ; for, you must note, that we speak now of the heart, and not of the purse—so that although the same tribute and tax, laid by consent, or by imposing, be all one to the purse, yet it works diversely⁷ upon the courage. So that you may

¹ Ambassage. *Embassy*. ' He sendeth an *ambassage*, and desireth conditions of peace.'—*Luke* xiv. 32.

² Enow. *Old plural of enough*.

' Man hath selfish foes *enow* besides,
That day and night for his destruction wait.'—*Milton*.

³ *Plut. Vit. Luculli*, 27.

⁴ Soberly. *Moderately*. ' Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think *soberly*.'—*Romans* xii. 3.

⁵ *Gen.* xlix. 9, 14.

⁶ Notably. *In a remarkable manner*. (From the adjective *notable*.)

' He is a most *notable* coward.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁷ Diversely. *Differently*. (From *diverse*.) See page 24.

conclude, that no people overcharged with tribute is fit for empire.

Let States, that aim at greatness, take heed how their nobility and gentlemen do multiply too fast; for that maketh the common subject grow to be a peasant and base swain, driven out of heart, and, in effect, but a gentleman's labourer. Even as you may see in coppice woods, if you leave your staddles too thick, you shall never have clean underwood, but shrubs and bushes; so in countries, if the gentlemen be too many, the commons will be base—and you will bring it to that, that not the hundredth poll will be fit for an helmet, especially as to the infantry, which is the nerve of an army,—and so there will be great population and little strength. This which I speak of hath been no where better seen than by comparing of England and France; whereof England, though far less in territory and population, hath been, nevertheless, an overmatch; in regard¹ the middle people of England make good soldiers, which the peasants of France do not: herein the device of King Henry VII. (whereof I have spoken largely in the history of his life) was profound and admirable, in making farms and houses of husbandry of a standard, that is, maintained with such a proportion of land unto them, as may breed a subject to live in convenient plenty, and no servile condition; and to keep the plough in the hands of the owners, and not mere hirelings; and thus indeed you shall attain to Virgil's character, which he gives to ancient Italy:—

‘Terra potens armis atque ubere glebæ.’²

Neither is the estate³ (which for anything I know, is almost peculiar to England, and hardly to be found anywhere else, except it be, perhaps, in Poland) to be passed over—I mean the state of free servants and attendants upon noblemen and gentlemen, which are no ways inferior unto the yeomanry for arms; and therefore, out of all question, the splendour and magnificence and great retinues, the hospitality of noblemen and gentlemen received into custom, do much conduce unto martial

¹ In regard. *For the reason that; on account of.* ‘Change was thought necessary in regard of the injury the Church had received.’—*Hooker.*

² Virg. *Æneid*, i. 335.

‘For deeds of arms, and fertile soil renown’d.’

³ Estate. *Order of men.* See page 146.

greatness—whereas, contrariwise, the close and reserved living of noblemen and gentlemen causeth a penury of military forces.

By all means it is to be procured,¹ that the trunk of Nebuchadnezzar's tree of monarchy² be great enough to bear the branches and the boughs; that is, that the natural subjects of the crown, or State, bear a sufficient proportion to the strange subjects that they govern. Therefore all States that are liberal of naturalization towards strangers are fit for empire; for to think that an handful of people can, with the greatest courage and policy in the world, embrace too large extent of dominion, it may hold for a time, but it will fail suddenly. The Spartans were a nice³ people in point of naturalization; whereby, while they kept their compass, they stood firm, but when they did spread, and their boughs were become too great for their stem, they became a windfall upon the sudden. Never any State was, in this point, so open to receive strangers into their Body as were the Romans; therefore it sorted⁴ with them accordingly, for they grew to the greatest monarchy. Their manner was to grant naturalization (which they called 'jus civitatis'⁵)—and to grant it in the highest degree, that is, not only 'jus commercii, jus connubii, jus hæreditatis,' but also 'jus suffragii' and 'jus honorum';⁶ and this not to singular⁷ persons alone, but likewise to whole families—yea, to cities, and sometimes to nations. Add to this, their custom of plantation of colonies, whereby the Roman plant was removed into the soil of other nations; and, putting both constitutions together, you will say, that it was not the Romans that spread upon the world, but it was the world that spread upon the Romans—and that was the sure way of greatness. I have marvelled sometimes at Spain, how they clasp and contain so large dominions with so few natural Spaniards: but sure the whole compass of Spain is a very great

¹ Procured. *Contrived; cared for.*

'Proceed, Sulinus, to procure my fall.'—*Shakespeare.*

² *Dan. iv. 10, seq.*

³ Nice. *Difficult.*

⁴ Sort. *To succeed; to happen.*

'And if it sort not well.'—*Shakespeare.*

⁵ 'The right of citizenship.'

⁶ 'The right of traffic, the right of marriage, the right of inheritance, the right of voting, and the right of bearing offices.'

⁷ Singular. *Single.* 'That which represents one determinate thing is called a singular idea.'—*Watts.*

body of a tree, far above Rome and Sparta at the first; and, besides, though they have not had that usage to naturalize liberally, yet they have that which is next to it—that is, to employ, almost indifferently, all nations in their militia of ordinary soldiers, yea, and sometimes in their highest commands; nay, it seemeth at this instant, they are sensible of this want of natives, as by the Pragmatical Sanction, now published, appeareth.

It is certain, that sedentary and within-door arts, and delicate manufactures (that require rather the finger than the arm), have in their nature a contrariety to a military disposition; and generally all warlike people are a little idle, and love danger better than travail¹—neither must they be too much broken off it, if they shall be preserved in vigour: therefore it was great advantage in the ancient States of Sparta, Athens, Rome, and others, that they had the use of slaves, which commonly did rid² those manufactures; but that is abolished, in greatest part, by the christian law. That which cometh nearest to it is, to leave those arts chiefly to strangers (which, for that purpose, are the more easily to be received), and to contain the principal bulk of the vulgar natives within those three kinds—tillers of the ground, free servants, and handicraftsmen of strong and manly arts, as smiths, masons, carpenters, &c., not reckoning professed soldiers.

But, above all, for empire and greatness, it importeth³ most, that a nation do profess arms as their principal honour, study, and occupation; for the things which we have formerly spoken of are but habilitations⁴ towards arms; and what is habilitation without intention and act? Romulus, after his death (as they report, or feign), sent a present⁵ to the Romans, that above all they should intend⁶ arms, and then they should prove the

¹ Travail. *Toil; labour.* ‘As every thing of price, so this doth require travail.’—*Hooker.*

² Rid. *To dispatch.*

‘We’ll thither straight; for willingness *rids* way.’—*Shakespere.*

³ Import. *To be of importance.* See page 24.

⁴ Habilitation. *Qualification.*

⁵ Present. *A mandate.*

‘Be it known to all men by these *presents.*’—*Shakespere.*

⁶ Intend. *To pay attention to.*

‘Go, therefore, mighty powers! *intend* at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery.’—*Milton.*

greatest empire of the world. The fabric of the State of Sparta was wholly (though not wisely) framed and composed to that scope and end: the Persians and Macedonians had it for a flash; the Gauls, Germans, Goths, Saxons, Normans, and others, had it for a time; the Turks have it at this day, though in great declination. Of christian Europe, they that have it are, in effect, only the Spaniards; but it is so plain that every man profiteth in that he most intendeth, that it needeth not to be stood upon; it is enough to point at it—that no nation which doth not directly profess arms, may look to have greatness fall into their mouths: and, on the other side, it is a most certain oracle of time, that those States that continue long in that profession (as the Romans and Turks principally have done), do wonders; and those that have professed arms but for an age, have, notwithstanding, commonly attained that greatness in that age which maintained them long after, when their profession and exercise of arms hath grown to decay.

Incident to this point is for a State to have those laws or customs which may reach forth unto them just occasions (as may be pretended¹) of war; for there is that justice imprinted in the nature of men, that they enter not upon wars (whereof so many calamities do ensue), but upon some, at the least specious, grounds and quarrels. The Turk hath at hand, for cause of war, the propagation of his law or sect; a quarrel² that he may always command. The Romans, though they esteemed the extending the limits of their empire to be great honour to their generals when it was done, yet they never rested upon that alone to begin a war. First, therefore, let nations that pretend to greatness have this, that they be sensible of wrongs, either upon borderers, merchants, or politic ministers; and that they sit not too long upon a provocation; secondly, let them be prest³ and ready to give aids and succours to their confederates, as it ever was with the Romans; insomuch, as if the confederates had leagues defensive with divers other States, and, upon

¹ Pretend. *To put forward.*

‘And his left foot *pretends*.’—*Dryden*.

² Quarrel. *Reason; ground for any action.* See page 96.

³ Prest. *Eager; quick.*

‘Each mind is *prest*, and open every ear,
To hear new tidings.’—*Fairfax*.

‘They pour’d *prestly* into the hall.’—*Old Ballad*, 1727.

invasion offered, did implore their aids severally, yet the Romans would ever be the foremost, and leave it to none other to have the honour. As for the wars, which were anciently made on the behalf of a kind of party, or tacit conformity of state, I do not see how they may be well justified; as when the Romans made a war for the liberty of Græcia,¹ or when the Lacedæmonians and Athenians made war to set up or pull down democracies and oligarchies; or when wars were made by foreigners, under the pretence of justice or protection, to deliver the subjects of others from tyranny and oppression, and the like. Let it suffice, that no estate expect to be great, that is not awake upon any just occasion of arming.

No body can be healthful without exercise, neither natural body nor politic; and certainly, to a kingdom or estate, a just and honourable war is the true exercise. A civil war, indeed, is like the heat of a fever; but a foreign war is like the heat of exercise, and serveth to keep the body in health; for in a slothful peace, both courages will effeminate,² and manners corrupt. But howsoever it be for happiness, without all question for greatness, it maketh to be still for the most part in arms: and the strength of a veteran army (though it be a chargeable business), always on foot, is that which commonly giveth the law, or, at least, the reputation, amongst all neighbour States, as may be well seen in Spain; which hath had, in one part or other, a veteran army almost continually, now by³ the space of six-score years.

To be master of the sea⁴ is an abridgment of a monarchy. Cicero, writing to Atticus of Pompey's preparation against Cæsar, saith, '*Consilium Pompeii plane Themistocleum est; putat enim, qui mari potitur, eum rerum potiri;*' and without doubt, Pompey had tired out Cæsar, if upon vain confidence he had not left that way. We see the great effects of battles by sea: the battle of Actium decided the empire of the world; the battle of Lepanto arrested the greatness of the Turk. There be many examples where sea-fights have been final to the war; but this

¹ Græcia. *Greece.* 'And the rough goat is the King of *Grecia.*'—*Dan.* viii. 21.

² Effeminate. *To become effeminate or weak.*

'In a slothful prince, courage will *effeminate.*'—*Pope.*

³ By. *During.* 'By the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one, night and day, with tears.'—*Acts* xx. 31.

⁴ 'Pompey's plan is plainly from Themistocles; for he judges that whoever becomes master of the sea is master of all things.'—*Ad Attic.* x. 8.

is when princes, or States, have set up their rest upon the battles; but thus much is certain, that he that commands the sea is at great liberty, and may take as much and as little of the war as he will; whereas those that be strongest by land are many times, nevertheless, in great straits. Surely, at this day, with us of Europe, the vantage¹ of strength at sea (which is one of the principal dowries of this kingdom of Great Britain) is great; both because most of the kingdoms of Europe are not merely² inland, but girt with the sea most part of their compass, and because the wealth of both Indies seems, in great part, but an accessory to the command of the seas.

The wars of later ages seem to be made in the dark, in respect of the glory and honour which reflected upon men from the wars in ancient time. There be now, for martial encouragement, some degrees and orders of chivalry, which, nevertheless, are conferred promiscuously upon soldiers and no soldiers, and some remembrance perhaps upon the escutcheon, and some hospitals for maimed soldiers, and such like things; but in ancient times, the trophies erected upon the place of the victory, the funeral laudatives³ and monuments for those that died in the wars, the crowns and garlands personal, the style of emperor, which the great kings of the world after borrowed, the triumphs of the generals upon their return, the great donatives and largesses upon the disbanding of the armies, were things able to inflame all men's courages; but, above all, that of the triumph amongst the Romans was not pageants, or gaudery,⁴ but one of the wisest and noblest institutions that ever was: for it contained three things, honour to the general, riches to the treasury out of the spoils, and donatives to the army. But that honour, perhaps, were not fit for monarchies, except it be in the person of the monarch himself, or his sons; as it came to pass in the times of the Roman emperors, who did impropriate⁵ the actual triumphs to themselves and their sons, for such wars as they did

¹ Vantage. *Advantage.*

'Yet you have all the *vantage* of her wrong.'—*Shakespeare.*

² Merely. *Completely.* See Note to Essay LVIII.

³ Laudatives. *Panegyrics.* 'The first was a *laudative* of monarchy.'—*Bacon's Speech.*

⁴ Gaudery. *Ostentatious finery.* 'The utmost *gaudery* of youth.'—*South.*

⁵ Impropriate. *Appropriate.* 'A supercilious tyranny, *impropriating* the Spirit of God to themselves.'—*Milton.*

achieve in person, and left only for wars achieved by subjects some triumphal garments and ensigns to the general.

To conclude. No man can by care-taking (as the Scripture saith) 'add a cubit to his stature,'¹ in this little model of a man's body; but in the great frame of kingdoms and commonwealths, it is in the power of princes, or estates, to add amplitude and greatness to their kingdoms; for by introducing such ordinances, constitutions, and customs, as we have now touched,² they may sow greatness to their posterity and succession. But these things are commonly not observed, but left to take their chance.

ANNOTATIONS.

'All States that are liberal of naturalization towards strangers are fit for empire.'

What Bacon says of naturalization is most true, and important, and not enough attended to. But he attributes more liberality in this point to the Romans than is their due. He seems to have forgotten their 'Social War,' brought on entirely by their refusal to admit their subjects to civil rights.

It is remarkable that, under the kings, and again under the emperors, there was the most of this liberality, and under the Republic, the least. This is quite natural: when it is the citizens that govern, they naturally feel jealous of others being admitted to an equality with them; but the sovereign has no reason to wish that one class or portion of his subjects should have an invidious advantage over another. There is an exception to this in cases where religious fanaticism comes in; as is to be seen in the Turkish empire, where christian subjects have always been kept as a kind of Helots.

On the ruinous results of keeping a portion of the people in such a state, I have already dwelt in the notes to the Essay on 'Seditions and Troubles.'

A somewhat similar disadvantage in respect of advancement

¹ Probably *ἡλικία* means not stature, but *age*. See *John* ix. 21-23; *Heb.* xi. 11; and *Luke* xii. 20.

² Touch. *To treat slightly*. 'If the antiquaries have *touched* it, they have immediately quitted it.'—*Addison*.

in virtue, at least, would attend any community whose institutions were such as tended to arm against the laws large bodies of such persons, as were not, in the outset, destitute of all moral principle, but whose mode of life was a fit training to make them become so. Such are poachers and smugglers. An excessive multiplication of the latter class is produced by the enactment of laws, whose object is, not revenue, but the exclusion of foreign productions, for the supposed benefit of domestic industry. Whatever may be thought of the expediency of those laws with a view to national wealth, all must agree that the extension of smuggling must produce the most demoralizing effects.

‘They enter not upon wars but upon some at least specious grounds.’

It is a very curious fact, that, throughout great part of the world, England has a bad name for *perfidy*, and for grasping *ambition*; while, in truth, it is probably the *only* great nation that ever was free from ambition; and is pre-eminent for good faith. Territorial aggrandizement has often been avoided by us, when there would have been a plausible plea for it; and so far from being [as by most States] welcomed with exultation, even when unjust, is regarded by the English Public as needing apology, even when it is in a manner forced upon us by circumstances.

Yet Napoleon the Great never ceased to declaim against the perfidious arts, and the insatiable cupidity of England. He could hardly have said more, if an English King had, in time of peace, entrapped, under pretext of friendship, a King of Spain, and sent an army to place his own brother on the throne: or if he had kidnapped a multitude of harmless non-belligerent French travellers who had entered his territory in time of peace. And if this had been done, the English King would not have found so many admirers and sympathizers in France, as Napoleon found in England.

The chief cause, probably, of the injustice done to our national character, is, the *freedom of the Press*, and of speech, beyond what exists in most other Countries, and of which our political partisans so largely avail themselves, in the use [of such language respecting their opponents as would hardly be tole-

rated elsewhere. Whatever political Party may chance to be in power, some members of the Opposition generally represent the Ministry as a set of the most unprincipled statesmen that ever existed. Now on the Continent the English *Government*,—that is, the *Ministry* for the time-being,—is considered as the *Nation*. And those who are predisposed, through envy, to think ill of the English Nation, have only to adopt the representations which Englishmen themselves—that is, those in Opposition—give of the existing Government.

‘Howsoever it be for happiness, without all question, for greatness, it maketh to be still for the most part in arms.’

It is consolatory to think that no one would now venture to write, as Bacon does, about wars of aggrandizement. But it was the doctrine of his day; and of times not only much earlier, but also much later than his; for the same sentiments are to be found in authors near two centuries after Bacon. Indeed we read in a Work of the present Generation, that ‘War is the condition of this World. From Man to the smallest insect all are at strife; and the glory of arms, which cannot be obtained without the exercise of honour, fortitude, courage, obedience, modesty and temperance,¹ excites the brave man’s patriotism, and is a chastening corrective for the rich man’s pride.’ But probably no non-military Writer, and very few, even of the Military, would now speak in such a tone.

True it is, Men are still bad enough in practice; but the theory must come first; and we may hope the practice will follow in time. It is certain that the folly as well as the wickedness of wars of aggrandizement is much better understood, and more freely acknowledged, than even fifty years back. And to the shame of Christians, it must be admitted that the more correct discernment of the costliness and consequent inexpediency of even a successful war of conquest—which are every day becoming better understood—operates more in making men pause before they enter into a war, than motives of humanity.

¹ It is remarkable that the same author has, in the very same Work, cited passages from letters of Sir Arthur Wellesley (afterwards Duke of Wellington), dated in May, 1809, complaining of the Army as ‘a rabble who cannot bear success or failure; behaving terribly ill; and plundering the country most terribly.’

The much agitated questions as to the allowableness of defensive war, need not be here discussed. The reader is referred to the *Lessons on Morals* (L. 14, § 5), where it is pointed out that those who hold the principle of complete non-resistance, cannot consistently resort to the *law* to enforce payment of a debt, or to obtain protection of any kind; since it is manifest that the law rests ultimately on the appeal to physical force.

As to the general question concerning the right of self-defence, it would evidently become a merely speculative one, and not at all practical, if *all* States, and all individuals, would abstain from *aggression*; since, then there would be no outrages to repel. But as it is, every State, and every individual, that does abstain from all aggression, is so much gained to the cause of humanity.

If, however, the principle of *non-resistance* were adopted by *some* States, and not by *all*, this would give up the peaceable to be subjugated by an ambitious and unscrupulous neighbour. And, moreover, they would not even enjoy peace after all. For, the conqueror would doubtless seek to recruit his armies for fresh conquests, from the subjugated nations. And though the *adults* might steadily refuse to fight for him, and prefer torture or death, he would probably take the finest of their male *children* to be trained in military seminaries; as was formerly done by the Turks to their christian subjects; whose children formed the original corps of Janissaries: so that the non-resisting people would have to see two or three hundred thousand of their finest youths serving in the wars of an ambitious conqueror.

It is important however to observe that whatever can be urged in vindication of bearing arms, is applicable only to the case of a man serving his *own* country; not, of one who enlists in a *foreign* army; however just—for *them*—may be the war they are engaged in. This practice, though countenanced, unhappily, by some persons who are accounted respectable, is surely quite unjustifiable on christian principles. If one who has deliberately gone about to take the lives of men with whom *his country was not at war*, should be tried—as there seems good reason he should be,—for MURDER, he could not fairly plead the sanction or command of *foreign* rulers, who had no right over him, and under whom he has *placed himself* by

his *own* voluntary act, for the express purpose of fighting their battles. Any one indeed who *settles* in a foreign country, and becomes a citizen of it, has the rights and the duties of a born-citizen: but not so, one who enlists *as a soldier*, in foreign service.

What used to mislead men, and still misleads not a few, as to the costliness of war, and the check it gives to national prosperity is, that they see the expenditure go to our own fellow-subjects. We pay a great deal, it is true, out of the public purse, to soldiers; but then it is *our* soldiers, the Queen's subjects, that get it. Powder, and guns, and ships of war, cost a great deal; but this cost is a gain to the manufacturers of powder and guns, &c. And thus people brought themselves to fancy that the country altogether did not sustain any loss at all. This very doctrine is distinctly maintained by Coleridge, in his periodical, *The Friend*, within the present century. He censures very strongly some who had bewailed a 'few millions' of war-expenditure, and who had pointed out how many roads might have been made, and fens drained, and other beneficial works accomplished with this money. Coleridge contends against this that the country had not lost it at all, since it was all spent on our own people; and he parallels it with such cases as that of a man losing money at cards to his own wife, or transferring it from one pocket to another. He was extremely fond of discussing what are really questions of political economy (though the *name* of it he disliked), and in which he almost always went wrong.

Of course, if a heavy expenditure is incurred in armaments, when necessary for the defence of our just rights, this is not to be accounted a waste, any more than the cost of bolts and locks to keep out thieves. But the argument of Coleridge does not at all look to any such necessity, but would equally hold good if the money had been expended in gunpowder to be exploded in fire-works, or in paying soldiers for amusing us with sham fights, or for playing cricket. For, in that case also, the expenditure would have gone to *our own* people equally.

The fallacy consists in not perceiving that, though the labour of the gunpowder-makers, soldiers, &c., is not unproductive to *them*, inasmuch as they are paid for it, it is unproductive to *us*,

as it leaves no valuable results. If gunpowder is employed in blasting rocks, so as to open a rich vein of ore or coal, or to make a useful road, the manufacturer gets his payment for it just the same as if it had been made into fire-works; but then, the mine, or the road, will remain as an article of wealth to him who has so employed it. After having paid for the powder, he will still be richer than he was before; whereas, if he had employed it for fire-works, he would have been so much the poorer, since it would have left no results.

When, however, war-expenditure does result in the conquest of some territory, and this territory brings in some tribute, or other profit beyond the cost of conquering it and keeping it in subjection—which is not often the case,—then, it must be admitted—waiving all considerations of justice and humanity—that something has been gained. But the revenue thus wrested from a subjugated country must evidently impoverish the one party as much (at least) as it enriches the other. The people of the conquered territory have to *pay for being ill-governed*; and their increase in prosperity is checked; while the greater part of what is taken from them goes to pay the garrisons that keep them in submission.

On the other hand, the revenue derived from other lands by commerce, enriches *both* parties; since the exchange of a cargo of hardware, for instance, for a cargo of silks, implies that the one who parts with the silk for the hardware, finds the latter the *more* valuable to him; and *vice versâ*. And thus both *advance* in prosperity.

From all the extensive provinces which the Romans held under their sway, the English, without holding them in subjection at all, derive many times the revenue that the Romans did; since our commerce with them has caused them to advance and to go on still advancing in prosperity.

If the Czar had spent half what he has spent in encroaching on his neighbours, in making roads, and draining marshes, and in other ways improving his own soil, he would have had much more of the true ‘greatness of empire,’ and a greatness far less likely to be overthrown by other States. For, as a general rule, States are not exempt from the influences of the same causes which, in the affairs of individuals, produce good or bad success. That the general tendency of each particular virtue

and vice in individuals is, to produce corresponding worldly advantages and disadvantages, is a doctrine which, in a speculative point of view at least, few would be disposed to controvert. And though this general rule admits of such numerous exceptions, that a right-minded and considerate man would not venture, in the case of any individual, to infer that his success in life had precisely corresponded with his deserts, or decidedly to promise, for example, prosperity to the honest, frugal, and industrious, and denounce certain ruin to the profligate ; yet he would not feel the less convinced of the certainty of the *general* rule,—that such conduct will, for the most part, be attended with such consequences. Thus, though we are not to believe that regular *temporal* rewards and punishments are dispensed under the moral government of God to nations, yet the general rule by which temperance, and integrity, and industry tend, in private life, to promote each man's health, and reputation, and prosperity, is applicable to nations also. Unprincipled aggression will usually provoke, sooner or later, a formidable retaliation ; and, on the other hand, moderation and good faith have manifestly a general tendency to promote peace and internal prosperity.¹

And thus it is that religion, which produces these fruits of moderation and good faith, has an indirect, as well as a direct, influence on national character. Its direct effects few will be disposed to deny, even of those who believe in no religion ; since, of several different forms of superstitious error, supposing all religions to be such, one may at least be more compatible with moral improvement than another. But it has an indirect effect also, through its influence on national prosperity. To take, for instance, the point of which we have just been speaking :—War, the direct demoralizing effects of which are probably still greater than its impoverishing effect, would be wholly unknown, if Christianity were heartily and generally embraced ; and, even as it is, it has been much mitigated by that humanizing influence. Slavery, too, equally demoralizing and impoverishing, would cease ; and if both Slavery and War were at an end, the wealth of nations would increase,—but their civilization in the most important points, would increase in a still greater ratio.

¹ See *Lectures on Political Economy*.

That this progressive civilization,—this advancement of mankind, not merely as individuals, but as communities,—is the design of the Almighty Creator, seems evident from the provision made by his divine Wisdom for the *progress* of Society. This provision is, I think, manifest in many portions of Man's conduct as a member of society, in which is to be traced the operation of impulses which, while tending immediately to some certain end contemplated by the agent, and therefore *rational*, may yet, as far as respects another and quite different end which he did *not* contemplate, be referred to a kind of *instinct*, or something analogous to instinct. He is led, while doing one thing, by choice, for his own benefit, to do another, undesignedly, under the guidance of Providence, for the service of the community.

But there is no case in which this providential guidance is more liable to be overlooked—no case in which we are more apt to mistake for the wisdom of Man what is, in truth, the wisdom of God.

In the results of instinct in brutes, we are sure, not only that, although the animals themselves are, in some sort, agents, they could not originally have designed the effects they produce, but that even afterwards, they have no notion of the combination by which these are brought about. But when *human* conduct tends to some desirable end, and the agents are competent to perceive that the end *is* desirable, and the means well adapted to it, they are apt to forget that, in the great majority of instances, those means were not devised, nor those ends proposed, by the persons themselves who are thus employed. The workman, for instance, who is employed in casting printing-types, is usually thinking only of producing a commodity by the sale of which he may support himself. *With reference to this object*, he is acting, not from any impulse that is at all of the character of instinct, but from a rational and deliberate choice: but he is also, in the very same act, contributing most powerfully to the diffusion of knowledge; about which, perhaps, he has no anxiety or thought: *in reference to this latter object*, therefore, his procedure corresponds to those operations of various animals which we attribute to instinct; since *they*, doubtless, derive some immediate gratification from what they are doing. Indeed, in all departments connected with the

acquisition and communication of knowledge, a similar procedure may be traced. The greater part of it is the gift, not of human, but of divine benevolence, which has implanted in Man a thirst after knowledge for its own sake, accompanied with a sort of instinctive desire, founded probably on sympathy, of communicating it to others, as an ultimate end. This, and also the love of display, are no doubt inferior motives, and will be superseded by a higher principle, in proportion as the individual advances in moral excellence. These motives constitute, as it were, a kind of scaffolding, which should be taken down by little and little, as the perfect building advances, but which is of indispensable use till that is completed.

It is to be feared, indeed, that Society would fare but ill if none did service to the Public, except in proportion as they possessed the rare moral and intellectual endowment of an enlightened public spirit. For, such a spirit, whether in the form of patriotism, or that of philanthropy, implies not merely *benevolent feelings* stronger than, in fact, we commonly meet with, but also powers of *abstraction* beyond what the mass of mankind *can* possess. As it is, many of the most important objects are accomplished by unconscious co-operation; and that, with a certainty, completeness, and regularity, which probably the most diligent benevolence, under the guidance of the greatest human wisdom, could never have attained.

For instance, let any one propose to himself the problem of supplying with daily provisions the inhabitants of such a city as London—that ‘province covered with houses.’ Let any one consider this problem in all its bearings, reflecting on the enormous and fluctuating number of persons to be fed,—the immense quantity of the provisions to be furnished, and the variety of the supply (not, as for an army or garrison, nearly uniform)—the importance of a convenient distribution of them, and the necessity of husbanding them discreetly, lest a deficient supply, even for a single day, should produce distress, or a redundancy produce (from the perishable nature of many of them) a corresponding waste; and then let him reflect on the anxious toil which such a task would impose on a Board of the most experienced and intelligent commissaries; who, after all, would be able to discharge their office but very inadequately. Yet this object is accomplished far better than it could be by any

effort of human wisdom, through the agency of men who think each of nothing beyond his own immediate interest—who are merely occupied in gaining a fair livelihood; and, with this end in view, without any comprehensive wisdom, or any need of it, they co-operate, unknowingly, in conducting a system which, we may safely say, no human wisdom directed to that end could have conducted so well—the system by which this enormous population is fed from day to day—and combine unconsciously to employ the wisest means for effecting an object, the vastness of which it would bewilder them even to contemplate.

I have said, ‘no *human* wisdom;’ for *wisdom* there surely is in this adaptation of the means to the result actually produced. And admirable as are the marks of contrivance and design in the anatomical structure of the human body, and in the instincts of the brute-creation, I know not whether it does not even still more excite our admiration of the beneficent wisdom of Providence, to contemplate, not corporeal particles, but rational, free agents, co-operating in systems no less manifestly indicating design, yet no design of theirs; and though acted on, not by gravitation and impulse, like inert matter, but by motives addressed to the will, yet advancing as regularly, and as effectually, the accomplishment of an object they never contemplated, as if they were the mere passive wheels of a machine. If one may, without presumption, speak of a more or less in reference to the works of Infinite Wisdom, I would say, that the branch of Natural Theology with which we are now concerned, presents to the reflective mind views even more striking than any other. The heavens do indeed ‘declare the glory of God;’ and the human body is ‘fearfully and wonderfully made;’ but Man, considered not merely as an organized Being, but as a rational agent, and as a member of society, is perhaps the most wonderfully contrived, and to us the most interesting, specimen of divine Wisdom that we have any knowledge of. Πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ, κ’ οὐδὲν ἀνθρώπου δεινότερον πέλει.

Now, it seems to me that, to this proof, that it is the design of Almighty Providence that mankind should advance in civilization, may be added one drawn from the fact that, in proportion as the religion of the Bible is embraced, and men become subjects to the *revealed* law of God, civilization progresses.

‘And here I would remark, that I do not profess to explain why, in so many particular instances, causes have been permitted to operate, more or less, towards the frustration of this general design, and the retardation, or even reversal, of the course of improvement. The difficulty, in fact, is one which belongs, not to this alone, but to every branch of Natural Theology. In every part of the universe we see marks of wise and benevolent design; and yet we see, in many instances, apparent frustrations of this design; we see the productiveness of the earth interrupted by unfavourable seasons—the structure of the animal-frame enfeebled, and its functions impaired, by disease—and vast multitudes of living Beings exposed, from various causes, to suffering, and to premature destruction. In the moral and political world, wars, and civil dissension—tyrannical governments, unwise laws, and all evils of this class, correspond to the inundations—the droughts—the tornados, and the earthquakes, of the natural world. We cannot give a satisfactory account of either;—we cannot, in short, explain the great difficulty, which, in proportion as we reflect attentively, we shall more and more perceive to be the *only* difficulty in theology, the *existence of evil* in the Universe.

Yet many, in almost every past age (and so it will be, I suppose, in all future ages), have shown a tendency towards such presumption as that of our first Parents, in seeking to pass the limits appointed for the *human* faculties, and to ‘be as *Gods*, KNOWING GOOD AND EVIL.’

‘But two things we *can* accomplish; which are very important, and which are probably *all* that our present faculties and extent of knowledge can attain to. One is, to perceive clearly that the difficulty in question is of no *unequal* pressure, but bears equally heavy on Deism and on Christianity, and on the various different interpretations of the christian scheme; and consequently can furnish no valid objection to any one scheme of religion in particular. Even atheism does not lessen our difficulty; it only alters the character of it. For as the believer in a God is at a loss to account for the existence of *evil*, the believer in *no* God is equally unable to account for the existence of *good*; or indeed of anything at all that bears marks of *design*.

‘Another point which is attainable is, to perceive, amidst all

the admixture of evil, and all the seeming disorder of conflicting agencies, a general tendency nevertheless towards the accomplishment of wise and beneficent designs.

‘As in contemplating an ebbing tide, we are sometimes in doubt, on a short inspection, whether the sea is really receding, because, from time to time, a wave will dash further up the shore than those which had preceded it, but, if we continue our observation long enough, we see plainly that the boundary of the land is on the whole advancing; so here, by extending our view over many Countries and through several Ages, we may distinctly perceive the tendencies which would have escaped a more confined research.’

ESSAY XXX. OF REGIMEN OF HEALTH.

THERE is a wisdom in this beyond the rules of physic: a man's own observation, what he finds good of,¹ and what he finds hurt of, is the best physic to preserve health; but it is a safer conclusion to say, 'This agreeth not well with me, therefore I will not continue it,' than this, 'I find no offence² of this, therefore I may use it:' for strength of nature in youth passeth over many excesses which are owing a man till his age. Discern of the coming on of years, and think not to do the same things still; for age will not be defied. Beware of sudden change in any great point of diet, and if necessity enforce it, fit the rest to it; for it is a secret, both in nature and state, that it is safer to change many things than one. Examine thy customs of diet, sleep, exercise, apparel, and the like, and try, in anything thou shalt judge hurtful, to discontinue it by little and little; but so as³ if thou dost find any inconvenience by the change, thou come back to it again; for it is hard to distinguish that which is generally held good and wholesome, from that which is good particularly, and fit for thine own body. To be free-minded and cheerfully disposed at hours of meat⁴ and sleep, and of exercise, is one of the best precepts of long lasting. As for the passions and studies of the mind, avoid envy, anxious fears, anger, fretting inwards, subtle and knotty inquisitions, joys and exhilarations in excess, sadness not communicated. Entertain hopes, mirth rather than joy, variety of delights rather than surfeit of them; wonder and admiration, and therefore novelties; studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects, as histories, fables, and contemplations of nature. If you fly physic in health altogether, it will be too strange for your body when you shall need it; if you make it

¹ Of. *From*. See page 286.

² Offence. *Hurt; damage*. (Now seldom applied to physical injury.) 'The pains of the touch are greater than the offences of other senses.'—*Bacon*.

'To do offence and scath in Christendom.'—*Shakespeare*.

³ As. *That*. See page 26.

⁴ Meat. *Food; meals*.

'As he sat at his meat, the music played sweet.'—*Old Ballad*.

too familiar, it will work no extraordinary effect when sickness cometh. I commend¹ rather some diet for certain seasons, than frequent use of physic, except it be grown into a custom ; for those diets alter the body more, and trouble it less. Despise no new accident in your body, but ask opinion of it. In sickness, respect² health principally, and in health, action ; for those that put their bodies to endure in health, may in most sicknesses which are not very sharp, be cured only with diet and tendering. Celsus could never have spoken it as a physician, had he not been a wise man withal, when he giveth it for one of the great precepts of health and lasting, that a man do vary and interchange contraries, but with an inclination to the more benign extreme ; use fasting and full eating, but rather full eating ; watching and sleep, but rather sleep ; sitting and exercise, but rather exercise, and the like ; so shall nature be cherished and yet taught masteries. Physicians are some of them so pleasing and conformable to the humour of the patient, as³ they press not the true cure of the disease ; and some others are so regular in proceeding according to art for the disease, as they respect not sufficiently the condition of the patient. Take one of a middle temper, or, if it may not be found in one man, combine two of either⁴ sort ; and forget not to call as well the best acquainted with your body, as the best reputed of for his faculty.

ANNOTATIONS.

'To be free-minded and cheerfully-disposed, at hours of meat is one of the best precepts.'

Hence, if there is any particular diet which is found necessary to one's health, it is best to make arrangements accordingly,

¹ Commend. *To recommend.* 'I commend unto you Phœbe, our sister.'—*Romans* xvi. 1.

² Respect. *Have regard to.* 'In judgment seats, not man's qualities, but causes only ought to be respected.'—*Kettleworth.*

³ As. *That.* See page 26.

⁴ Either. *Each.* 'On either side of the river.'—*Rev.* xxii. 2.

once for all ; and not to be anxiously thinking at each meal what will agree or disagree.

A late eminent practitioner made his dyspeptic patients *weigh out* so many ounces of each kind of food, at each meal. He could not have taken a more effectual mode of impeding good digestion, than by making them thus ‘eat bread by weight, and with trembling, and drink water by measure, and with astonishment.’

It is remarkable that Bacon should have said nothing in this Essay, of early and late hours ; though it is a generally received opinion that early hours are conducive to longevity. There is a proverb that

‘ Early to bed, and early to rise,
Makes a man healthy, and wealthy, and wise.’

And this is the more remarkable as being the proverb of a nation whose hours are the latest of any.

It is reported of some judge, that whenever a witness came before him of extraordinary age (as is often the case when evidence is required relative to some remote period) he always inquired into the man’s habits of life ; and it is said that he found the greatest differences between them (some temperate, and others free-livers ; some active, and some sedentary), except in the one point that they were all early risers.

On the connexion between early hours and longevity, the late Mr. Davison wittily remarked that this may be the meaning of the fabled marriage of Tithonus and Aurora. ‘*Longa Tithonum minuit senectus.*’

Some have said, that this matter admits of easy explanation : ‘as men grow old they find themselves tired early in the evening, and accordingly retire to rest ; and hence, in the morning they find themselves wakeful, and rise.’ Now, if it be stated as an ultimate *fact*, not to be accounted for, that those who have kept late hours in their youth, adopt, from inclination, early hours as they grow old, then, this statement, whether true or false (and it is one which would not be generally admitted), is at least intelligible. But if it be offered as an *explanation*, it seems like saying that the earth stands on an elephant, and the elephant on a tortoise, and the tortoise again, on the earth. An old man rises early because he had

gone to bed early: and he goes to bed early, because he had risen early!

Some, when dissuading you from going to bed late, will urge that it is bad to have too little sleep; and when advising you not to lie a-bed late, will urge that it is bad to have too much sleep; not considering that early or late hours, if they do but correspond with themselves, as to the times of retiring and rising, have nothing to do with the *quantity* of sleep. For if one man goes to bed at ten, and rises at six, and another goes to bed at two in the morning, and rises at ten, each has the same number of hours in bed. If the one of these is (as is generally believed) more healthful than the other, it must be from some different cause.

If the prevailing belief be correct, it would seem that there must be some mysterious connexion between the human frame, and the earth's rotation. And this is further indicated by that instinctive perception which most people have, in certain cases, of the rest-time. It is well known that any one who has been long accustomed to rise at a certain hour, will usually wake at that hour, *whatever* may have been the time of *his going to bed*. It might have been expected that one who had been used to a certain number of hours' sleep, would, if on some occasion he retired to rest an hour or two earlier, or later, than usual, wake so much the earlier, or the later, when he had had the accustomed time of sleep. But the fact is generally otherwise. He will be likely to wake neither before nor after the accustomed hour.

This, again, may be relied on as a fact: a student at one of the universities, finding that his health was suffering from hard study and late hours, took to rising at five and going to bed at ten, all the year round; and found his health—though he read as hard as ever—manifestly improved. But he found himself unable to *compose* anything in the morning, though he could *take in* the sense of an author equally well. And having to write for a prize, he could not get his thoughts to flow till just about his usual bedtime. Thinking that this might have something to do with the digestion, he took to dining two hours earlier, in the hopes that then eight o'clock would be to him the same as ten. But it made no difference. And after persevering in vain attempts for some time, he altered his hours,

and for one week, till he had finished his essay, sat up and wrote at night, and lay a-bed in the morning. He could *revise* and correct in the day-time what he had written; but could not compose except at night. When his essay was finished, he returned to his early habits.

Now this is a decisive answer to those who say 'it is all *custom*; you write better at night, because that is the time you have been accustomed to employ for study;' for here, the custom was just the reverse. And equally vain is the explanation, that 'the night hours are *quiet*, and you are sure of having no *interruption*.' For this student was sure of being quite free from interruption from five o'clock till chapel-time at eight. And the streets were much *more still* then than at midnight. And again: any explanation connected with *day-light* breaks down equally. For, as far as that is concerned, in the winter-time it makes no difference whether you have three hours more candle-light in the earlier part of the night, or before sunrise.

There is a something that remains to be explained, and it is better to confess ignorance than to offer an explanation that explains nothing.

One other circumstance connected with hours has not been hitherto accounted for—namely, the *sudden* cold which comes on just at the first *peep* of *dawn*. Some say the earth is gradually cooling after the sun has set; and consequently the cold must have reached its height just before the return of the sun. This theory sounds plausible to those who have had little or no personal experience of daybreak; but it does not agree with the fact. The cold does *not* gradually increase during the night; but the temperature grows alternately warmer and colder, according as the sky is *clouded* or clear. And all who have been accustomed to night-travelling must have often experienced many such alternations in a single night. And they also find that the cold at day-break comes on very *suddenly*: so much so, that in spring and autumn it often happens that it catches the earth-worms, which on mild nights lie out of their holes: and you may often see a whole grass-plot strewn with their frozen bodies in a frosty morning. If the cold had not come on *very* suddenly, they would have had time to withdraw into their holes.

And any one who is accustomed to go out before daylight will often, in the winter, find the roads full of liquid mud half-an-hour before dawn, and by sunrise as hard as a rock. Then those who had been in bed will often observe that 'it was a hard frost last night,' when in truth there had been no frost at all till day-break.

Who can explain all these phenomena? The subject is so curious, that the digression into which it has led, will, I trust, be pardoned.

'As for the passions and studies of the mind, avoid . . .'

Of persons who have led a temperate life, those will have the best chance of longevity who have done hardly anything else but *live*;—what may be called the *neuter verbs*—not active or passive, but only *being*: who have had little to do, little to suffer; but have led a life of quiet retirement, without exertion of body or mind,—avoiding all troublesome enterprise, and seeking only a comfortable obscurity. Such men, if of a pretty strong constitution, and if they escape any remarkable calamities, are likely to live long. But much affliction, or much exertion, and, still more, both combined, will be sure to *tell* upon the constitution—if not at once, yet at least, as years advance. One who is of the character of an active or passive verb, or, still more, both combined, though he may be said to have lived long in everything but years, will rarely reach the age of the neuters.

ESSAY XXXI. OF SUSPICION.

SUSPICIONS amongst thoughts are like bats amongst birds, —they ever fly by twilight. Certainly they are to be repressed, or, at the least, well guarded, for they cloud the mind, they lose friends, and they check with¹ business, whereby business cannot go on currently² and constantly; they dispose kings to tyranny, husbands to jealousy, wise men to irresolution and melancholy; they are defects, not in the heart, but in the brain, for they take place in the stoutest natures, as in the example of Henry VII. of England. There was not a more suspicious man nor a more stout; and in such a composition³ they do small hurt, for commonly they are not admitted but with examination whether they be likely or no; but in fearful natures they gain ground too fast. There is nothing makes a man suspect much, more than to know little; and, therefore, men should remedy suspicion by procuring to know more, and not to keep their suspicions in smother.⁴ What would men have?—do they think those they employ and deal with are saints? do they not think they will have their own ends, and be truer to themselves than to them? therefore there is no better way to moderate suspicions, than to account upon such suspicions as true, and yet to bridle them as false; for so far a man ought to make use of suspicions, as to provide, as if that should be true that he suspects, yet it may do him no hurt. Suspicions that the mind of itself gathers, are but buzzes; but suspicions that are artificially nourished, and put into men's heads by the tales and whisperings of others, have stings. Certainly, the best mean⁵ to clear the way in this same wood of suspicion, is frankly to communicate them with⁶ the party that

¹ Check with. *Interfere with.* See page 111.

² Currently. *With continued progression.* 'Time, as it currently goes on, establishes a custom.'—*Hayward.*

³ Composition. *Temperament.* 'A very proud or a very suspicious temper, falseness, or sensuality . . . these are the ingredients in the composition of that man whom we call a scorner.'—*Atterbury.*

⁴ Smother. *A state of being stifled.* See page 303.

⁵ Mean. *Means.* See page 213.

⁶ Communicate with. *Impart to.* See page 302.

he suspects : for thereby he shall be sure to know more of the truth of them than he did before, and withal shall make that party more circumspect, not to give further cause of suspicion ; but this would¹ not be done to men of base natures, for they, if they find themselves once suspected, will never be true. The Italian says, ‘Sospetto licencia fede;’² as if suspicion did give a passport to faith ; but it ought rather to kindle it to discharge itself.

ANTITHETA ON SUSPICION.

PRO.

* * * * *

‘Merito ejus fides suspecta est, quam suspicio labefacit.

‘*The fidelity which suspicion overthrows, deserves to be suspected.*’

CONTRA.

‘Suspicio fidem absolvit.

‘*He who is suspected is not on his honour.*’

 ANNOTATIONS.

‘*Suspensions amongst thoughts are like bats amongst birds,—they ever fly by twilight.*’

As there are dim-sighted persons, who live in a sort of perpetual *twilight*, so there are some who, having neither much clearness of head, nor a very elevated tone of morality, are perpetually haunted by suspicions of everybody and everything. Such a man attributes—judging in great measure from himself—interested and selfish motives to every one. Accordingly, having no great confidence in his own penetration, he gives no one credit for an open and straightforward character, and will always suspect some underhand dealings in every one, even when he is unable to perceive any motive for such conduct, and when the character of the party affords no ground for suspicion. (‘Ill-doers are ill-deemers.’³) One, on the contrary, who has a fair share of intelligence, and is himself thoroughly up-

¹ Would. *Should*. ‘As for percolation, which belongeth to separation, trial *would* be made by clarifying, by a clarion of milk put into warm beer.’—Bacon’s *Nat. History*.

² ‘Suspicion releases faith.’

³ See *Proverbs for Copy-lines*.

right, will be comparatively exempt from this torment. He knows, from consciousness, that there is *one* honest man in the world; and he will consider it very improbable that there should be *but* one. He will therefore look carefully to the general character and conduct of those he has to deal with; suspecting those—and those only—who have given some indications of a want of openness and sincerity, trusting those who have given proof of an opposite character, and keeping his judgment suspended as to those of whom he has not sufficient knowledge.

Such a man has (as was observed in the note on the Essay on 'Cunning') a better knowledge of human nature than another just equal to him in experience and sagacity, whose tone of morality is low. For he knows that there *are* knaves in the world; and he knows also that there are honest men; while the other can hardly be brought to believe in the existence of thorough-going honesty.

And the frank and simple-hearted will deal better, on the whole, than the suspicious, even with those who are not of the very highest moral character. For these, if they find that they have credit for speaking truth, when there is no good ground for suspecting the contrary, and that insidious designs are not imputed to them without reason, will feel that they have a character to keep up or to lose: and will be, as it were, put upon their honour. But these same persons, perhaps, if they find themselves always suspected, will feel like the foxes in one of Gay's fables, who, finding that they had an incurably bad name for stealing poultry, thought that they might as well go on with the practice, which would, at any rate, be imputed to them.

A dean of a college, at one of our universities, told an undergraduate, who was startled and shocked at finding his word doubted, that he could not trust the young men for speaking truth, for that they regarded a lie to the dean as no lie. And, probably, this was really the case with the majority of them. For when they found that a man's word was not believed by him, they had no scruple about saying to him what was untrue; on the ground that where no confidence was reposed, none could be violated. And these same men, when the office of dean was held by another Fellow, of opposite character, who put them on

their honour, never thought (except a very few utterly worthless ones) of telling a falsehood to *him*.

A person who once held offices of high importance, and of vast difficulty and delicacy, was enabled to say, after more than thirty years' experience, that though he had been obliged to employ many persons in confidential services, and to impart to them some most momentous secrets, he had never once had his confidence betrayed. No one of them ever let out an important secret confided to him, or in any way betrayed the trust reposed in him. Of course, this person did not trust indiscriminately; nor did he trust all to an equal extent. And he occasionally found men turn out worse than he had hoped: and often had plots and cabals formed against him, and had lies told to him. But he never was, properly speaking, *betrayed*. He always went on the principle of believing that some men are thoroughly honest, and some utterly dishonest, and some intermediate; and thoroughly trusting, or thoroughly distrusting, where he saw good reasons for doing so; and suspending his judgment respecting the rest: not putting himself in their power—yet not making them objects of suspicion without cause,—but letting them see that he *hoped* well of them, and considered the presumption to be on the side of innocence till guilt is proved.

A man of an opposite character, who was long in a very high and important position, afforded matter for doubt and discussion among those who knew him, as to the opinion he entertained of mankind. Some thought that he had a very good, and some a very mean, estimate of men in general. And each were, in a certain sense, right. He seems to have regarded all men as being what a person of truly elevated moral character would have called base and contemptible; but *he* did not feel any such disapprobation or contempt for them, because he had no notion of anything better. He was a very good-humoured man, and far from a misanthrope; and he could no more be said to dislike or despise men for being nothing superior to what he thought them to be, than we should be said to despise horses or dogs for being no more than brutes. He may be said, therefore, to have thought very favourably of mankind, as thinking most men to be as virtuous as any man need be, or could be—and as doing nothing that he, or any one, need be ashamed

of. And again, he may be said to have thought very *unfavourably* of mankind, inasmuch as he had no notion at all of a character of exalted virtue, and regarded any indication of pure and high principle as affectation and humbug, and always suspected every one of acting for such ends, and employing such means, as a really high-minded man would reject with disdain.

Yet he was a very intelligent and acute man as far as regards the lower parts of human nature. His constant suspicion of inferior motives and underhand proceeding, arose from the *moral twilight* of his mind.

In reference to such suspicions as relate rather to things than persons—the doubts which sometimes flutter about in the occasional twilight of the mind, respecting the evidence for important and well-established conclusions, I will take the liberty of extracting some admirable passages from the *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1847, on ‘The Genius of Pascal’:—

‘Neither has the understanding the absolute dominion in the formation of our judgments, nor does she occupy an ‘unshaken throne.’ A seditious rabble of doubts, from time to time, rise to dispute her empire. Even where the mind, in its habitual states, is unconscious of any remaining doubt,—where it reposes in a vast preponderance of evidence in favour of this or that conclusion,—there may yet be, from one or other of the disturbing causes adverted to, a momentary eclipse of that light in which the soul seemed to dwell;—a momentary vibration of that judgment which we so often flattered ourselves was poised for ever. Yet this no more argues the want of habitual faith than the variations of the compass argue the severance of the connexion between the magnet and the pole; or, than the oscillations of the ‘rocking stone’ argue that the solid mass can be heaved from its bed. A child may shake, but a giant cannot overturn it.

‘And, as a *matter of fact*, there are, we apprehend, very few who have not been conscious of sudden and almost unaccountable disturbances of the intellectual atmosphere, unaccountable even after the equilibrium has been restored, and the air has again become serene and tranquil. In these momentary fluctuations, whether arising from moral or physical causes, or from causes of both kinds—from nervous depression, or a fit of melancholy, or

an attack of pain, or harassing anxieties, or the loss of friends, or their misfortunes and calamities, or signal triumphs of baseness, or signal discomfitures of virtue, or, above all, from conscious neglect of duty—a man shall sometimes feel as if he had lost sight even of those primal truths on which he has been accustomed to gaze as on the stars of the firmament—bright, serene, and unchangeable; even such truths as the existence of God, his paternal government of the world, and the divine origin of Christianity.

‘In these moods, objections which he thought had long since been dead and buried, start again into sudden existence. They do more: like the escaped genius of the *Arabian Nights*, who rises from the little bottle in which he had been imprisoned, in the shape of a thin smoke, which finally assumes gigantic outlines, and towers to the skies, these flimsy objections dilate into monstrous dimensions, and fill the whole sphere of mental vision. The arguments by which we have been accustomed to combat them seem to have vanished, or, if they appear at all, look diminished in force and vividness. If we may pursue the allusion we have just made, we even wonder how such mighty forms should ever have been compressed into so narrow a space. Bunyan tells us, that when his pilgrims, under the perturbation produced by previous terrible visions, turned the perspective glass towards the Celestial City from the summits of the Delectable Mountains, their hands shook so that they could not steadily look through the instrument; yet they *thought* they saw something like the gate, and also ‘some of the glory of the place.’ It is even so with many of the moods in which other ‘pilgrims’ attempt to gaze in the same direction; a deep haze seems to have settled over the golden pinnacles and the ‘gates of pearl;’ they, for a moment, doubt whether what others declare they have seen, and what they flatter themselves they have seen themselves, be anything else than a gorgeous vision in the clouds; and ‘faith’ is no longer ‘the substance of things hoped for,’ and the evidence of ‘things not seen.’

‘And as there are probably few who have profoundly investigated the evidences of truth, who have not felt themselves for a moment at least, and sometimes for a yet longer space, as if on the verge of universal scepticism, and about to be driven forth, without star or compass, on a boundless ocean of doubt

and perplexity, so these states of feeling are peculiarly apt to infest the highest order of minds. For if, on the one hand, these can best discern and estimate the evidence which proves any truth, they, on the other, can see most clearly and feel most strongly the nature and extent of the objections which oppose it; while they are, at the same time, just as liable as the vulgar to the disturbing influences already adverted to. This liability is of course doubled, when its subject, as in the case of Pascal, labours under the disadvantage of a gloomy temperament.

‘A circumstance which in these conflicts of mind often gives *sceptical* objections an undue advantage is, that the great truths which it is more especially apt to assail are generally the result of an accumulation of proof by induction, or are even dependent on quite separate trains of argument. The mind, therefore, cannot comprehend them at a glance, and feel at once their integrated force, but must examine them in detail by successive acts of mind,—just as we take the measurement of magnitudes too vast to be seen at once, in successive small portions. The existence of God, the moral government of the world, the divine origin of Christianity, are all truths of this stamp. Pascal, in one of his *Pensées*, refers to this infirmity of the logical faculties. He justly observes—‘To have a series of proofs incessantly before the mind is beyond our power.’ D’en avoir toujours les preuves présentes, c’est trop d’affaire.

‘From the inability of the mind to retain in perpetuity, or to comprehend at a glance, a long chain of evidence, or the total effect of various lines of argument, Pascal truly observes that it is not sufficient for the security of our convictions, and their due influence over our belief and practice, that we have proved them, once for all, by a process of reasoning:—they must be, if possible, tinged and coloured by the imagination, informed and animated by feeling, and rendered vigorous and practical by habit. His words are well worth writing:—‘Reason acts slowly, and with so many views upon so many principles which it is necessary should be always present, that it is perpetually dropping asleep, and is lost for want of having all its principles present to it. The affections do not act thus; they act instantaneously, and are always ready for action. It

is necessary, therefore, to imbue our faith with feeling; otherwise it will be always vacillating.'

'It will not, of course, be imagined that, in the observations we have now made, we are disposed to be the *apologists* of scepticism; or even, so far as it is yielded to, of that transient doubt to which we affirm even the most powerful minds are not only liable, but liable in defiance of what are ordinarily their strong convictions. So far as such states of mind are involuntary (and for an instant they often are, till, in fact, the mind collects itself, and repels them), they are of course the object, not of blame, but of pity. So far as they are dependent upon fluctuations of feeling, or upon physical causes which we can at all modify or control, it is our duty to summon the mind to resist the assault, and reflect on the nature of that evidence which has so often appeared to us little less than demonstrative.

'We are not, then, the apologists of scepticism, or anything approaching it; we are merely stating a psychological fact, for the proof of which we appeal to the recorded confessions of many great minds, and to the experience of those who have reflected deeply enough on any large and difficult subject to know what can be said for or against it.

'The asserted fact is, that *habitual* belief of the sincerest and strongest character is sometimes checkered with transient fits of doubt and misgiving, and that, even when there is no actual *disbelief*—no, not for a moment; the mind may, in some of its moods, form a very diminished estimate of the evidence on which belief is founded, and grievously understate it accordingly. We believe that both these states of mind were occasionally experienced by Pascal—the latter, however, much more frequently than the former; and hence, as we apprehend, are we to account for those passages in which he speaks of the evidence for the existence of a God, or for the truth of Christianity, as less conclusive than he ordinarily believed, or than he has at other times declared them.

'At such times, the clouds may be supposed to have hung low upon this lofty mind.

'So little inconsistent with *a habit* of intelligent faith are such transient invasions of doubt, or such diminished perceptions of the evidence of truth, that it may even be said that it

is only those who have in some measure experienced them, who can be said, in the highest sense, to believe at all. He who has never had a doubt, who believes what he believes for reasons which he thinks as irrefragable (if that be possible) as those of a mathematical demonstration, ought not to be said so much to *believe* as to *know*; his belief is to him knowledge, and his mind stands in the same relation to it, however erroneous and absurd that belief may be. It is rather he who believes—not indeed without the exercise of his reason, but without the full satisfaction of his reason—with a knowledge and appreciation of formidable objections—it is this man who may most truly be said intelligently to believe.’ (Pages 213-217.)

The same thought is thus expressed in a short poem by Bp. Hinds :—

‘And the Apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.’—*Luke* xvii. 5.

‘What ! gazing on your Saviour’s face,
And listening to his word,
Dared you to ask for further grace,
To credit all you heard ?
‘Yet so it is ; belief springs still
In souls that nurture doubt ;
And we must go to Him who will
The baneful weed cast out.
‘Did never thorns thy path beset ?
Beware—be not deceived ;
He who has never doubted yet,
Has never yet believed.’

‘Wise men assuredly consider it as a most important element in the education of their own children, not indeed that they should be taught to believe what they are told without any reason (and if they have been properly trained, a just confidence in the assurances of their superiors in knowledge will on many subjects be reason sufficient), yet, upon evidence far less than demonstration ; indeed, upon evidence far less than they will be able to appreciate, when the lapse of a few brief years has transformed them from children into men. We certainly expect that they will believe many things as *facts*, which as yet they cannot fully comprehend—nay, which they tell us are, in appear-

ance, paradoxical ; and to rest satisfied with the assurance, that it is vain to attempt to explain the evidence until they get older and wiser. We are accustomed even to augur the worst results as to the future course and conduct of a youth who has not learned to exercise thus much of practical faith, and who flip-pantly, on the score of *his* not being able to comprehend them, rejects truths of which he yet has greater evidence, though not *direct* evidence, of their being truths, than he has of the contrary. Now, 'if we have had earthly fathers, and have given them reverence,' after this fashion, and, when we have become men, have applauded our submission as appropriate to our condition of dependence, 'shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of Spirits, and live?' If, then, the present be a scene of moral education and discipline, it seems fit in itself that the evidence of the truths we believe should be checkered with difficulties and liable to objections ; should be not strong enough to force assent, nor so obscure as to elude sincere investigation.

'God, according to the memorable aphorism of Pascal already cited, has afforded sufficient light to those whose object is to see, and left sufficient obscurity to perplex those who have no such wish. All that seems necessary or reasonable to expect is, that as we are certainly not called upon to believe anything *without* reason, nor without a *preponderance* of reason, so the evidence shall be such as our faculties are capable of dealing with ; and that the objections shall be only such as equally baffle us upon any other hypothesis, or are insoluble only because they transcend altogether the limits of the human understanding : which last circumstance can be no valid reason, apart from other grounds, either for accepting or rejecting a given dogma.

'Now, we contend, that it is in this equitable way that God has dealt with us as moral agents, in relation to all the great truths which lie at the basis of religion and morals ; and, we may add, in relation to the divine origin of Christianity. The evidence is all of such a *nature* as we are accustomed every day to deal with and to act upon ; while the objections are either such as reappear in every other theory, or turn on difficulties absolutely beyond the limits of the human faculties.' (Pages 217-218.)

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‘It is much the same with the evidences of Christianity. Whether a certain amount and complexity of testimony are likely to be false; whether it is likely that not one, but a number of men, would endure ignominy, persecution, and the last extremities of torture, in support of an unprofitable lie; whether such an original fiction as Christianity—if it be a fiction—is likely to have been the production of Galilean peasants; whether anything so sublime was to be expected from fools, or anything so holy from knaves; whether illiterate fraud was likely to be equal to such a wonderful fabrication; whether infinite artifice may be expected from ignorance, or a perfectly natural and successful assumption of truth, from imposture:—these, and a multitude of the like questions, are precisely of the same *nature*, however they may be decided, with those with which the historian and the advocate, judges and courts of law, are every day required to deal. On the other hand, whether miracles have ever been, or are ever likely to be, admitted in the administration of the universe, is a question on which it would demand a far more comprehensive knowledge of that administration than we can possibly possess, to justify an *à priori* decision. That they are possible, is all that is required; and that, no consistent theist can deny. Other difficulties of Christianity, as Bishop Butler has so clearly shown, baffle us on every other hypothesis; they meet us as much in the ‘constitution of nature,’ as in the pages of revelation; and cannot consistently be pleaded against Christianity without being equally fatal to theism.

‘There are two things, we will venture to say, at which the philosophers of some future age will stand equally astonished: the one is, that any man should have been called upon to believe *any* mystery, whether of philosophy or religion, without a preponderance of evidence of a nature which he can grasp, or on the mere *ipse dixit* of a fallible creature like himself; the other, that where there *is* such evidence, man should reject a mystery, merely because it is one.

‘This last, perhaps, will be regarded as the more astonishing of the two. That Man—who lives in a dwelling of clay, and looks out upon the illimitable universe through such tiny windows—who stands, as Pascal sublimely says, between ‘two infinitudes’

—who is absolutely surrounded by mysteries, which he overlooks only because he is so familiar with them,—should doubt a proposition (otherwise well sustained) from its intrinsic difficulty, does not seem very reasonable. But when we further reflect that that very mind which erects itself into a standard of all things, is, of all things, the most ignorant of that which it ought to know best—itsself, and finds there the most inscrutable of all mysteries,—when we reflect that when asked to declare what itself is, it is obliged to confess that it knows nothing about the matter—nothing either of its own essence or its mode of operation,—that it is sometimes inclined to think itself material, and sometimes immaterial—that it cannot quite come to a conclusion whether the body really exists, or is a phantom, or in what way (if the body really exists) the intimate union between the two is maintained,—when we see it perplexed beyond expression, even to conceive how these phenomena can be reconciled—proclaiming it to be an almost equal contradiction to suppose that matter can think, or the soul be material, or a connexion maintained between two totally different substances, and yet admitting that one of these must be true, though it cannot satisfactorily determine which,—when we reflect on all this, surely we cannot but feel that the spectacle of so ignorant a Being refusing to believe a proposition, merely *because* it is above its comprehension, is, of all paradoxes, the most paradoxical, and of all absurdities, the most ludicrous.’ (Pages 219, 220.)

‘*There is nothing makes a man suspect much, more than to know little ; and, therefore, men should remedy suspicion by procuring to know more.*’

This is equally true of the suspicions that have reference to things as of persons. I extract a passage bearing upon this point, from the *Cautions for the Times* :—

‘Multitudes are haunted by the spectres, as it were, of vague surmises and indefinite suspicions, which continue thus to haunt them, just because they are vague and indefinite,—because the mind has never ventured to look them boldly in the face, and put them into a shape in which reason can examine them.

‘Now, would it not be an act of great charity towards such persons to persuade them to cast away their unreasonable

timidity, and scrutinize such objections, instead of trying to banish them by force? For though, no doubt, *some* difficulties and objections will always remain that cannot be *directly* cleared up or answered, yet the vastly greatest number of seeming objections and difficulties can be satisfactorily removed by careful examination and increased knowledge; and the experience of this will lead us to be confident that, if we could proportionately enlarge our faculties and acquirements (which is what we may hope for in a better world), the rest would vanish also. And, in the meanwhile, it is of great importance to know exactly what they are, lest our fancies should unduly magnify their number and weight; and also in order to make us see that they are as nothing in comparison of the still greater difficulties on the opposite side,—namely, the objections which we should have to encounter, if we *rejected* Christianity.

‘Well, but,’ it is said, ‘though that course may be the best for well-read and skilful Divines, it is better not to notice objections *generally*, for fear of alarming and unsettling the minds of plain unlearned people, who had probably never heard of anything of the kind. Let them continue to read their Bible without being disturbed by any doubts or suspicions that might make them uneasy.’

‘Now, if in some sea-chart for the use of mariners, the various rocks and shoals which a vessel has to pass in a certain voyage, were to be wholly omitted, and no notice taken of them, no doubt many persons might happen to make the voyage safely, and with a comfortable feeling of security, from not knowing at all of the existence of any such dangers. But suppose some one did strike on one of these rocks, from not knowing—though the makers of the chart did—of its existence, and consequently perished in a shipwreck which he might have been taught to avoid,—on whose head would his blood lie?

‘And again, if several voyagers came to suspect, from vague rumours, that rocks and shoals (perhaps more formidable than the real ones) did lie in their course, without any correct knowledge where they lay, or how to keep clear of them, then, so far from enjoying freedom from apprehension, they would be exposed to increased alarm—and much of it needless alarm,—without being, after all, preserved from danger.

‘And so it is in the present case. Vague hints that learned

men have objected to such and such things, and have questioned this or that, often act like an inward slow-corroding canker in the minds of some who have never read or heard anything distinct on the subject; and who, for that very reason, are apt to imagine these objections, &c., to be much more formidable than they really are. For there are people of perverse mind, who, really possessing both learning and ingenuity, will employ these to dress up in a plausible form something which is, in truth, perfectly silly: and the degree to which this is sometimes done, is what no one can easily conceive without actual experience and examination.

‘It is, therefore, often useful, in dealing even with the unlearned, to take notice of groundless and fanciful theories and interpretations, contained in books which probably most of them will never see, and which some of them perhaps will never even hear of; because many persons are a good deal influenced by reports, and obscure rumours, of the opinions of some supposed learned man, without knowing distinctly what they are; and are likely to be made uneasy and distrustful by being assured that this or that has been disputed, and so and so maintained, by some person of superior knowledge and talents, who has proceeded on ‘rational’ grounds; when, perhaps, they themselves are qualified by their own plain sense to perceive how *ir-rational* these fanciful notions are, and to form a right judgment on the matters in question.

‘Suppose you were startled in a dark night by something that looked like a spectre in a winding-sheet,—would not he who should bring a lantern, and show you that it was nothing but a white cloth hanging on a bush, give you far better encouragement than he who merely exhorted you to ‘look another way, keep up your heart, whistle, and pass on?’

No avowedly anti-christian advocate is half so dangerous as those professed believers who deprecate and deride all study of *evidence*,—all endeavour to ‘prove all things, and hold fast that which is good,’ and to be always ‘ready to give a reason of the hope that is in us.’¹

¹ See *Elements of Logic*, Appendix iii.

ESSAY XXXII. OF DISCOURSE.

SOME in their discourse desire rather commendation of wit, in being able to hold all arguments, than of judgment, in discerning what is true; as if it were a praise to know what might be said, and not what should be thought. Some have certain commonplaces and themes, wherein they are good, and want variety; which kind of poverty is for the most part tedious, and, when it is once perceived, ridiculous. The honourablest part of the talk is to give the occasion; and again to moderate,¹ and pass to somewhat else; for then a man leads the dance. It is good in discourse, and speech of conversation, to vary and intermingle speech of the present occasion with arguments, tales with reasons, asking of questions with telling of opinions, and jest with earnest; for it is a dull thing to tire, and as we say now, to jade² anything too far. As for jest, there be certain things which ought to be privileged from it—namely, religion, matters of state, great persons, any man's present business of importance, and any case that deserveth pity; yet there be some that think their wits have been asleep, except they dart out somewhat that is piquant, and to the quick—that is a vein which would be bridled:—

‘Parce puer stimulis, et fortius utere loris.’³

And, generally, men ought to find the difference between saltiness and bitterness. Certainly, he that hath a satirical vein, as he maketh others afraid of his wit, so he had need be afraid of others' memory. He that questioneth much shall learn much, and content much, but especially if he apply his questions to the skill of the persons whom he asketh, for he shall give them occasion to please themselves in speaking, and himself shall continually gather knowledge; but let his questions not be troublesome, for that is fit for a poser;⁴ and let him be sure

¹ Moderate. *Regulate*. Those who presided at University-disputations were called *Moderators*.

² Jade. *To over-ride or drive*.

‘I do not now fool myself to let imagination *jade* me.’—*Shakespeare*.

³ ‘Boy, spare the spur, and more tightly hold the reins.’—Ovid. *Met.* ii. 127.

⁴ Poser. *Examiner*. (From *pose*, to interrogate closely.) ‘She *posed* him, and sifted him to try whether he were the very Duke of York or not.’—Bacon's *Henry VII.*

to leave other men their turns to speak—nay, if there be any that would reign and take up all the time, let him find means to take them off, and bring others on, as musicians used to do with those that dance too long galliards.¹

If you dissemble sometimes your knowledge of that² you are thought to know, you shall be thought, another time, to know that you know not. Speech of a man's self ought to be seldom, and well chosen. I knew one was wont to say in scorn, 'He must needs be a wise man, he speaks so much of himself,'—and there is but one case wherein a man may commend himself with a good grace, and that is in commending virtue in another, especially if it be such a virtue whereunto himself pretendeth.³ Speech of touch⁴ towards others should be sparingly used; for discourse ought to be as a field, without coming home to any man. I knew two noblemen, of the west part of England, whereof the one was given to scoff, but kept ever royal cheer in his house; the other would ask of those that had been at the other's table, 'Tell truly, was there never a flout⁵ or dry blow given?' To which the guest would answer, 'Such and such a thing passed.' The lord would say, 'I thought he would mar a good dinner.'

Discretion of speech is more than eloquence; and to speak agreeably⁶ to him with whom we deal, is more than to speak in good words or in good order. A good continued speech, without a good speech of interlocution, shows slowness; and a good reply, or second speech, without a good settled speech, sheweth shallowness and weakness. As we see in beasts, that those that are weakest in the course, are yet nimblest in the

¹ Galliard. *A sprightly dance.*

'Gay galliards here my love shall dance,
Whilst I my foes goe fighte.'—*Fair Rosamond.*

'What is thy excellence in a galliard, Knight?'—*Shakespeare.*

² That. *What; that which.* See page 82.

³ Pretend to. *Lay claim to.* 'Those countries that pretend to freedom.'—*Swift.*

⁴ Touch. *Particular application.* 'Dr. Parker, in his sermon before them, touched them for their being so near that they went near to touch him for his life.'—*Hayward.*

⁵ Flout. *Jeer; taunt; gibe.*

'These doors are barred against a bitter flout;
Snarl if you please; but you shall snarl without.'—*Dryden.*

'Full of comparisons and wounding flouts.'—*Shakespeare.*

⁶ Agreeably. *In a manner suited.*

turn ; as it is betwixt the greyhound and the hare. To use too many circumstances¹ ere² one come to the matter, is wearisome ; to use none at all, is blunt.

ANNOTATIONS.

Among the many just and admirable remarks in this essay on ‘ Discourse,’ Bacon does not notice the distinction—which is an important one—between those who speak because they *wish to say something*, and those who speak because they have *something to say*: that is, between those who are aiming at displaying their own knowledge or ability, and those who speak from fullness of matter, and are thinking only of the matter, and not of themselves and the opinion that will be formed of them. This latter, Bishop Butler calls (in reference to writings) ‘ a man’s writing with simplicity, and in earnest.’ It is curious to observe how much more agreeable is even inferior conversation of this latter description, and how it is preferred by many,—they know not why—who are not accustomed to analyse their own feelings, or to inquire why they like or dislike.

Something nearly coinciding with the above distinction, is that which some draw between an ‘ unconscious ’ and a ‘ conscious ’ manner ; only that the latter extends to persons who are not courting applause, but anxiously guarding against censure. By a ‘ conscious ’ manner is meant, in short, a continual thought about oneself, and about what the company will think of us. The continual effort and watchful care on the part of the speaker, either to obtain approbation, or at least to avoid disapprobation, always communicates itself, in a certain degree, to the hearers.

Some draw a distinction, again, akin to the above, between the *desire to please*, and the *desire to give pleasure* ; meaning by the former, an anxiety to obtain for yourself the good opinion

¹ Circumstances. *Non-essential particulars ; adjuncts.*

‘ This peroration, with such *circumstance*.’—*Shakespere.*

² Ere. *Before.* ‘ The nobleman said unto him, Sir, come down *ere* my child die.’—*John* iv. 49.

of those you converse with, and by the other, the wish to gratify *them*.

Aristotle, again, draws the distinction between the *Eiron* and the *Bomolochus*,—that the former seems to throw out his wit for his own amusement, and the other for that of the company. It is this latter, however, that is really the ‘conscious’ speaker; because he is evidently seeking to obtain credit as a wit by his diversion of the company. The word seems nearly to answer to what we call a ‘*wag*.’ The other is letting out his good things merely from his own fulness.

When that which has been called ‘consciousness’ is combined with great timidity, it constitutes what we call ‘shyness;’ a thing disagreeable to others, and a most intense torture to the subject of it.

There are many (otherwise) sensible people who seek to cure a young person of that very common complaint, by *exhorting* him not to be shy,—telling him what an awkward appearance it has,—and that it prevents his doing himself justice, &c. All which is manifestly pouring oil on the fire to quench it. For, the very cause of shyness is an over-anxiety as to what people are thinking of you; a morbid attention to your own appearance. The course, therefore, that ought to be pursued is exactly the reverse. The sufferer should be exhorted to think as little as possible about himself, and the opinion formed of him,—to be assured that most of the company do not trouble their heads about him,—and to harden him against any impertinent criticisms that may be supposed to be going on,—taking care only to do what is right, leaving others to think and say what they will.

And the more intensely occupied any one is with the subject-matter of what he is saying—the business itself that he is engaged in,—the less will his thoughts be turned on himself, and what others think of him.

A. was, as a youth, most distressingly bashful. After he had taken Orders, he was staying at a friend’s house, where there was also another clergyman, who was to preach, and who remarked to him how *nervous* he always felt in preaching in a *strange church*,—asking whether the other did not feel the same. Perhaps he expected to be complimented on his modesty; but A. replied, ‘I never allow myself to feel nervous in preaching;

I dare not be thinking of *myself*, and of the opinion formed of me, when I have such a momentous work in hand, as my Master's cause, and the salvation of souls.' The other, a little taken by surprise, admitted that this was what a christian minister ought to be occupied with; 'but,' said he, 'he may be allowed, surely, to feel doubts as to his own qualification for so high and important an office.' 'True,' replied A., 'but the proper time for such doubts is *before he takes Orders*; after that, he should be thinking only of the work itself, and of striving to *become* more and more qualified for it.'

As for the greater degree of nervousness [bashfulness] felt in addressing a large assembly than a few, I beg leave to extract a passage from my *Elements of Rhetoric*, in which I have endeavoured to account for this remarkable phenomenon,—for surely it must be considered as such,—that a person who is able with facility to express his sentiments in private to a friend, in such language, and in such a manner, as would be perfectly suitable to a certain audience, yet finds it extremely difficult to address to that audience the very same words, in the same manner; and is, in many instances, either completely struck dumb, or greatly embarrassed, when he attempts it. 'Most persons are so *familiar* with the fact, as hardly to have ever considered that it requires explanation: but attentive consideration shows it to be a very curious, as well as important one; and of which no explanation, as far as I know, has been attempted. It cannot be from any superior deference which the speaker thinks it right to feel for the judgment of the hearers; for it will often happen that the single friend, to whom he is able to speak fluently, shall be one whose good opinion he more values, and whose wisdom he is more disposed to look up to, than that of all the others together. The speaker may even feel that he himself has a decided and acknowledged superiority over every one of the audience; and that he should not be the least abashed in addressing any two or three of them, separately; yet, still, all of them, collectively, will often inspire him with a kind of dread.

'Closely allied in its causes with the phenomenon I am considering, is that other curious fact, that the very same sentiments, expressed in the same manner, will often have a far more powerful effect on a large audience than they would have

on any one or two of these very persons, separately. That is, in a great degree, true of all men, which was said of the Athenians, that they were like sheep, of which a flock is more easily driven than a single one.

‘Another remarkable circumstance, connected with the foregoing, is the difference in respect of the style which is suitable, respectively, in addressing a multitude, and two or three even of the same persons. A much *bolder*, as well as less accurate, kind of language is both allowable and advisable, in speaking to a considerable number; as Aristotle has remarked,¹ in speaking of the *Graphic* and *Agonistic* styles,—the former, suited to the closet, the latter, to public speaking before a large assembly. And he ingeniously compares them to the different styles of painting: the greater the crowd, he says, the more distant is the view; so that in scene-painting, for instance, coarser and bolder touches are required, and the nice finish, which would delight a close spectator, would be lost. He does not, however, account for the phenomena in question.

‘The solution of them will be found by attention to a very curious and complex play of sympathies which takes place in a large assembly; and (within certain limits), the more, in proportion to its numbers. First, it is to be observed that we are disposed to sympathize with any emotion which we believe to exist in the mind of any one present; and hence, if we are at the same time otherwise disposed to feel that emotion, such disposition is in consequence heightened. In the next place, we not only ourselves feel this tendency, but we are sensible that others do the same; and thus, we sympathize not only with the other emotions of the rest, but also with their sympathy towards us. Any emotion, accordingly, which we feel, is still further heightened by the knowledge that there are others present who not only feel the same, but feel it the more strongly in consequence of their sympathy with ourselves. Lastly, we are sensible that those around us sympathize not only with ourselves, but with each other also; and as we enter into this heightened feeling of theirs likewise, the stimulus to our own minds is thereby still further increased.

‘The case of the *Ludicrous* affords the most obvious illustra-

¹ *Rhetoric*, book iii.

tion of these principles, from the circumstance that the effects produced are so open and palpable. If anything of this nature occurs, you are disposed, by the character of the thing itself, to laugh; but much more, if any one else is known to be present whom you think likely to be diverted with it; even though that other should not know of your presence; but much more still, if he does know it; because you are then aware that sympathy with your emotion heightens his: and most of all will the disposition to laugh be increased, if many are present; because each is then aware that they all sympathize with each other, as well as with himself. It is hardly necessary to mention the exact correspondence of the fact with the above explanation. So important, in this case, is the operation of the causes here noticed, that hardly any one ever laughs when he is quite alone; or if he does, he will find, on consideration, that it is from a *conception* of the presence of some companion whom he thinks likely to have been amused, had he been present, and to whom he thinks of describing, or repeating, what had diverted himself. Indeed, in other cases, as well as the one just instanced, almost every one is aware of the *infectious* nature of any emotion excited in a large assembly. It may be compared to the increase of sound by a number of echoes, or of light, by a number of mirrors; or to the blaze of a heap of firebrands, each of which would speedily have gone out if kindled separately, but which, when thrown together, help to kindle each other.

‘The application of what has been said to the case before us is sufficiently obvious. In addressing a large assembly, you know that each of them sympathizes both with your own anxiety to acquit yourself well, and also with the same feeling in the minds of the rest. You know also, that every slip you may be guilty of, that may tend to excite ridicule, pity, disgust, &c., makes the stronger impression on each of the hearers, from their mutual sympathy, and their consciousness of it. This augments your anxiety. Next, you know that each hearer, putting himself mentally in the speaker’s place,¹ sympathizes with this aug-

¹ Hence it is that *shy* persons are, as is matter of common remark, the more distressed by this infirmity when in company with those who are subject to the same.

mented anxiety : which is, by this thought, increased still further. And if you become at all embarrassed, the knowledge that there are so many to sympathize, not only with that embarrassment, but also with each other's feelings on the perception of it, heightens your confusion to the utmost.

‘The same causes will account for a skilful orator's being able to rouse so much more easily, and more powerfully, the passions of a *multitude* : they inflame each other by mutual sympathy and mutual consciousness of it. And hence it is that a bolder kind of language is suitable to such an audience ; a passage which, in the closet, might, just at the first glance, tend to excite awe, compassion, indignation, or any other such emotion, but which would, on a moment's cool reflection, appear extravagant, may be very suitable for the *Agonistic* style ; because, *before* that moment's reflection could take place in each hearer's mind, he would be aware, that every one around him sympathized in that first emotion ; which would thus become so much heightened as to preclude, in a great degree, the ingress of any counteracting sentiment.

‘If one could suppose such a case as that of a speaker (himself aware of the circumstance), addressing a multitude, each of whom believed himself to be the *sole* hearer, it is probable that little or no embarrassment would be felt, and a much more sober, calm, and finished style of language would be adopted.’

There are two kinds of orators, the distinction between whom might be thus illustrated. When the moon shines brightly we are apt to say, ‘How beautiful is this *moon-light* !’ but in the day-time, ‘How beautiful are the trees, the fields, the mountains !’—and, in short, all the *objects* that are illuminated ; we never speak of the sun that makes them so. Just in the same way, the really greatest orator shines like the sun, making you think much of the *things* he is speaking of ; the second-best shines like the moon, making you think much of *him* and his *eloquence*.

'To use too many circumstances, ere you come to the matter, is wearisome.'

Bacon might have noticed some who *never* 'come to the matter.' How many a meandering discourse one hears, in which the speaker aims at nothing, and—hits it.

'If you dissemble sometimes your knowledge of that you are thought to know, you shall be thought, another time, to know that you know not.'

This suggestion might have come in among the tricks enumerated in the Essay on 'Cunning.'

ESSAY XXXIII. OF PLANTATIONS.¹

PLANTATIONS are amongst ancient, primitive, and heroical works. When the world was young it begat more children, but now it is old, it begets fewer ; for I may justly account new plantations to be the children of former kingdoms. I like a plantation in a pure soil, that is, where people are not dis-planted² to the end to plant in others ; for else it is rather an extirpation than a plantation. Planting of countries is like planting of woods ; for you must make account to lose almost twenty years' profit, and expect your recompense in the end ; for the principal thing that hath been the destruction of most plantations, hath been the base and hasty drawing of profit in the first years. It is true, speedy profit is not to be neglected, as far as it may stand³ with the good of the plantation, but no farther.

It is a shameful and unblessed thing to take the scum of people, and wicked condemned men, to be the people with whom you plant ; and not only so, but it spoileth the plantation ; for they will ever live like rogues, and not fall to work, but be lazy, and do mischief, and spend victuals, and be quickly weary, and then certify over to their country to the discredit of the plantation. The people wherewith you plant ought to be gardeners, ploughmen, labourers, smiths, carpenters, joiners, fishermen, fowlers, with some few apothecaries, surgeons, cooks, and bakers. In a country of plantation, first look about what kind of victual the country yields of itself to hand ; as ches-nuts, walnuts, pine-apples, olives, dates, plums, cherries, wild honey, and the like, and make use of them. Then consider what victual or esculent things there are, which grow speedily, and within the year ; as parsneps, carrots, turnips, onions, ra-

¹ Plantations. *Colonies*. 'Towns here are few, either of the old or new plantations.'—*Heylin*.

² Displant. 'Those French pirates that *displanted* us.'—*Beaumont and Fletcher*.

³ Stand. *To be consistent with*. 'His faithful people, whatsoever they rightly ask, they shall receive, as far as may *stand* with the glory of God and their own everlasting good.'—*Hooker*.

dish, artichokes of Jerusalem,¹ maize, and the like: for wheat, barley, and oats, they ask too much labour; but with peas and beans you may begin, both because they ask less labour, and because they serve for meat as well as for bread; and of rice likewise cometh a great increase, and it is a kind of meat. Above all, there ought to be brought store of biscuit, oatmeal, flour, meal,² and the like, in the beginning, till bread may be had. For beasts or birds, take chiefly such as are least subject to diseases, and multiply fastest: as swine, goats, cocks, hens, turkeys, geese, house-doves, and the like. The victual in plantations ought to be expended almost as in a besieged town, that is, with certain allowance; and let the main part of the ground employed to³ gardens or corn be to⁴ a common stock, and to be laid in, and stored up, and then delivered out in proportion; besides some spots of ground that any particular person will manure for his own private.⁵ Consider likewise, what commodities the soil where the plantation is doth naturally yield, that they may some way help to defray the charge of the plantation; so it be not, as was said, to the untimely prejudice of the main business, as it hath fared with tobacco in Virginia. Wood commonly aboundeth but too much, and therefore timber is fit to be one. If there be iron ore, and streams whereupon to set the mills, iron is a brave⁶ commodity where wood aboundeth. Making of bay salt, if the climate be proper for it, would be put in experience;⁷ growing silk, likewise, if any be, is a likely commodity; pitch and tar, where store of firs and pines are, will not fail; so drugs and sweet woods, where they are,

¹ Artichokes of Jerusalem. *A well-known culinary plant*, originally of Brazil: the name Jerusalem being merely a corruption of the Italian *Girasole*—that is Sun-flower, or Turn-sole.

² 'Flour' is still used in Suffolk to signify, exclusively, that which is finely sifted; and 'meal' that which comes from the mill.

³ To. *In*. 'Still a greater difficulty upon translators rises from the peculiarities every language has to itself.'—*Felton*.

⁴ To. *For*. See page 261. 'The proper business of the understanding is not that which men always employ it to.'—*Locke*.

⁵ Private. *Particular use or benefit; private object*.

'Nor must I be unmindful of my private,
For which I have called my brother and the tribunes,
My kinsfolk, and my clients to be near me.'—*Ben Jonson*.

⁶ Brave. *Excellent; fine*.

'A brave attendance.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁷ Experience. *Experiment; trial*. 'As curious experiences did affirm.'—*Rag*.

cannot but yield great profit; soap ashes likewise, and other things that may be thought of; but moil¹ not too much under ground, for the hope of mines is very uncertain, and useth to make the planters lazy in other things.

For government, let it be in the hands of one, assisted with some counsel, and let them have commission to exercise martial laws, with some limitation. And, above all, let men make that profit of being in the wilderness, as² they have God always, and his service before their eyes. Let not the government of the plantation depend upon too many counsellors and undertakers³ in the country that planteth, but upon a temperate number; and let those be rather noblemen and gentlemen, than merchants; for they look ever to the present gain. Let there be freedoms from custom, till the plantation be of strength, and not only freedom from custom, but freedom to carry their commodities where they may make their best of them, except⁴ there be some special cause of caution. Cram not in people, by sending too fast, company after company, but rather hearken⁵ how they waste, and send supplies proportionably; but so as the number may live well in the plantation, and not by surcharge be in penury. It hath been a great endangering to the health of some plantations, that they have built along the sea and rivers, in marish⁶ and unwholesome grounds; therefore, though you begin there, to avoid carriage and other like discommodities,⁷ yet build still rather upwards from the stream than along it. It concerneth likewise the health of the plantation that they

¹ Moil. *To toil; to drudge.*

‘Now he must *moil* and drudge for one he loathes.’—*Dryden.*

² As. *That.* See page 26.

³ Undertakers. *Managers of affairs.*

‘Nay, if you be an *undertaker*, I am for you.’—*Shakespeare.*

—(Now confined to the managers of funerals.)

⁴ Except. *Unless.* See page 299.

⁵ Hearken. *Watch; observe.*

‘They do me too much injury

That ever said I *hearkened* for your death.’—*Shakespeare.*

‘I mount the terrace, thence the town survey,

And *hearken* what the fruitful sounds convey.’—*Dryden.*

⁶ Marish. *Marshy; swampy.* ‘The fen and quagmire, so *marish* by kind, are to be drained.’—*Tusser.*

⁷ Discommodities. *Inconveniences.* ‘We stand balancing the *discommodities* of two corrupt disciplines.’—*Milton.*

have good store of salt with them, that they may use it in their victuals when it shall be necessary.

If you plant where savages are, do not only entertain them with trifles and gingles, but use them justly and graciously, with sufficient guard, nevertheless; and do not win their favour by helping them to invade their enemies, but for their defence, it is not amiss; and send oft¹ of them over to the country that plants, that they may see a better condition than their own, and commend it when they return.

When the plantation grows to strength, then it is time to plant with women as well as with men, that the plantation may spread into generations, and not be ever pieced from without. It is the sinfullest thing in the world to forsake or destitute² a plantation once in forwardness; for, besides the dishonour, it is the guiltiness of blood of many commiserable³ persons.

ANNOTATIONS.

'Plantations are amongst ancient, primitive, and heroical works.'

Bp. Hinds remarks on the great success with which the ancient Greeks colonized: pursuing an opposite plan from that of all nations since, and, accordingly, with opposite results.

An ancient Greek colony was like what gardeners call a *layer*; a portion of the parent tree, with stem, twigs, and leaves, imbedded in fresh soil till it had taken root, and then severed. A modern colony is like handfuls of twigs and leaves pulled off at random, and thrown into the earth to take their chance.

¹ Oft. *Often* (chiefly used in poetry).

'Oft she rejects, but never once offends.'—Pope.

² Destitute. *To leave destitute*. 'Suppose God thus *destitute* us, yet over-anxiety, or solicitude, or using of unlawful means, can never be able to secure us.'—Hammond.

³ Commiserable. *Worthy of compassion*. 'This *commiserable* person, Edward,'—Bacon's *Henry VII*.

'It is a shameful and unblessed thing to take the scum of people, and wicked condemned men, to be the people with whom you plant.'

Yet two-and-a-half centuries after Bacon's time, the English government, in opposition to the remonstrances of the enlightened and most emphatically experienced philanthropist—Howard,—established its penal colonies in Australia, and thus, in the language of Shakespere, 'began an impudent nation.'

It is now above a quarter of a century since I began pointing out to the public the manifold mischiefs of such a system; and with Bacon and Howard on my side, I persevered in braving all the obloquy and ridicule that were heaped on me. But successive ministries, of the most opposite political parties, agreed in supporting what the most eminent Political-economist of the present day had described as 'a system begun in defiance of all reason, and persevered in in defiance of all experience.'

'And not only so, but it spoileth the plantation.'

Bacon has not pointed out one particular disadvantage of this mode of colonization. The emancipists, as they are called—those who have come out as convicts,—are described, and that by some advocates of the system, as for the most part idle, unthrifty settlers; and the *currency*, those born in the colony, are represented as *generally preferring a seafaring life; having the odious associations of crime and slavery connected with agricultural pursuits*,—a feeling perfectly natural under such circumstances, but the very last one we would wish to find in a colony. One of the results—not, I apprehend, originally contemplated when penal colonies were established in New South Wales by the English government,—is that these 'wicked condemned men' have planted for themselves several volunteer colonies; escaping in small craft either to the South Sea Islands (in many of which, for a good while past, each native chief has for a prime-minister some choice graduate of the university of Newgate), or, more frequently, to some part of the coast of New Holland. Thus the land is certainly planted, but it is planted with the worst of weeds, according to the ingenious experiment suggested, in the *Tempest*, for Prospero's island:—

*'Gonzalo. Had I plantation of this isle, my lord . . .
Antonio. He'd sow it with nettle seed.'*

This was one of the arguments put forward by me, in the hope of awakening the public mind to the real character and extent of the evil, in a pamphlet in the form of a letter addressed to Earl Grey, from which I give some extracts.

‘The defenders of the system generally keep out of sight the inconsistency of professing to aim at the mutual benefit of the mother country and the colonies, on a plan which sets the two in direct opposition: and present, separately and alternately, the supposed advantage of ‘getting rid’ (as it is called) of criminals, and that of encouraging a growing colony; so as to withdraw the attention from the real incompatibility of the two.

‘In other subjects, as well as in this, I have observed that two distinct objects may, by being dexterously presented, again and again in quick succession, to the mind of a cursory reader, be so associated together *in his thoughts*, as to be conceived capable, when in fact they are not, of being *actually* combined in practice. The fallacious belief thus induced bears a striking resemblance to the optical illusion effected by that ingenious and philosophical toy called the ‘thaumatrope;’ in which two objects painted on opposite sides of a card,—for instance, a man, and a horse,—a bird, and a cage,—are by a quick rotatory motion, made to impress the eye in combination, so as to form one picture, of the man on the horse’s back,—the bird in the cage, &c. As soon as the card is allowed to remain at rest, the figures, of course, appear as they really are, separate and on opposite sides. A mental illusion closely analogous to this is produced, when, by a rapid and repeated transition from one subject to another, alternately, the mind is deluded into an idea of the actual combination of things that are really incompatible. The chief part of the defence which various writers have advanced in favour of the system of penal colonies consists, in truth, of a sort of intellectual thaumatrope. The prosperity of the colony, and the repression of crime, are, by a sort of rapid whirl, presented to the mind as combined in one picture. A very moderate degree of calm and fixed attention soon shows that the two objects are painted on *opposite sides* of the card.

‘In aid of this and the other modes of defence resorted to, a topic is introduced from time to time in various forms, which is equally calculated to meet all objections whatever on all subjects :

—that no human system can be expected to be perfect ; that some partial inconvenience in one part or in another must be looked for ; and that no plan can be so well devised as not to require vigilant and judicious superintendence, to keep it in effectual operation, and to guard against the abuses to which it is liable, &c.

‘ All this is very true, but does not in reality at all meet the present objections. Though we cannot build a house which shall never need repair, we may avoid such a misconstruction as shall cause it to fall down by its own weight. Though it be impossible to construct a time-piece which shall need no winding up, and which shall go with perfect exactitude, we may guard against the error of making the wheels necessarily obstruct each other’s motions. And though a plan of penal legislation, which shall unite all conceivable advantages and be liable to no abuses, be unattainable, it is at least something gained if we do but keep clear of a system which by its very constitution shall have a *constant and radically inherent tendency to defeat our principal object*.

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‘ For, let any one but calmly reflect for a few moments on the position of a Governor of one of our penal colonies, who has the problem proposed to him of accomplishing two distinct and in reality inconsistent objects : to legislate and govern in the best manner with a view to—1st, *the prosperity of the colony*, and also, 2ndly, *the suitable punishment of the convicts*. It is well known that *slave labour* is the least profitable ; and can seldom be made profitable at all, but by the most careful, difficult, troublesome, and odious superintendence. The most obvious way, therefore, of making the labour of the convicts as advantageous as possible to the colony, is to make them as unlike slaves as possible,—to place them under such regulations, and with such masters, as to ensure their obtaining not only ample supplies both of necessaries and comforts, but in all respects favourable and even indulgent treatment ; in short, to put them as much as possible in the *comfortable situation which free labourers enjoy*, where labour is so valuable, as from the abundance of land, and the scarcity of hands, it must be, in a *new settlement*.

‘ And the masters themselves may be expected, for the most

part, to perceive that their own interest (which is the *only* consideration *they* are *expected* to attend to) lies in the same direction. They will derive most profit from their servants, by keeping them as much as possible in a cheerful and contented state, even at the expense of connivance at many vices, and of so much indulgence as it would not, in this country, be worth any master's while to grant, when he might turn away an indifferent servant and hire another. The master of the convict-servants would indeed be glad, for his own profit, to exact from them the utmost reasonable amount of labour, and to maintain them in a style of frugality equal to, or even beyond that of a labourer in England: but he will be sure to find that the attempt to accomplish this would defeat his own object; and he will be satisfied to realize such profit as is within reach. He will find that a labourer who does much less work than would be requisite, here, to earn the scantiest subsistence, and who yet is incomparably better fed than the best English labourer, does yet (on account of the great value of labour) bring a considerable profit to his master; though to employ such a labourer on such terms, would, in England, be a loss instead of a profit. It answers to him, therefore, to acquiesce in anything short of the most gross idleness and extravagance, for the sake of keeping his *slave* (for after all it is best to call things by their true names) in tolerably good humour, rather than resort to the troublesome expedient of coercion, which might be attended with risk to his person or property from an ill-disposed character, and at any rate would be likely to make such a servant sulky, perverse, and wilfully neglectful. 'To give some idea of the serious loss of time, as well as of the great trouble caused by being far removed from a magistrate alone, I need only state, that when a convict-servant misconducts himself, the settler must either send the vagabond to the nearest magistrate, not improbably some *thirty* or *forty* miles distant, or he must overlook the offence.'¹

'It may easily be conceived, therefore, what indulgent treatment most of the convicts are likely to receive, even from the more respectable class of settlers. As for the large proportion, who are themselves very little different in character, tastes, and habits, from their convict-servants, *they* may be expected usually

¹ *Excursions in New South Wales*, by Lieutenant Breton.

to live (as the travellers who have described the colony assure us they do) on terms of almost perfect equality with them, associating with them as boon-companions. But, to say nothing of these, the more respectable settlers will be led, by a regard for their own interest, to what is called the humane treatment of their servants; that is, to endeavour to place all those in their employ who are *not much worse* than such as, in this country, few would think it worth while to employ at all, in a better situation than the most industrious labourers in England.

‘Now, it is evident that the very reverse of this procedure is suitable for a *house of correction*,—a *place of punishment*. And it is no less evident that a Governor must be led both by his feelings,—by his regard for his own ease,—and by his wish for popularity with all descriptions of persons around him, as well as by his regard for the prosperity of the colony, to sacrifice to *that* object the primary and most important one,—of making transportation, properly, a penalty. We can seldom expect to find a Governor (much less a *succession* of Governors) willing, when a choice is proposed of two objects at variance with each other, to prefer the situation of keeper of a house of correction, to that of a Governor of a flourishing colony. The utmost we can expect is to find now and then one, crippling the measures of his predecessors and of his successors, by such efforts to secure both objects as will be most likely to defeat both. But the individual settlers, to whom is intrusted the chief part of the detail of the system, are not (like the Governor) even called on by any requisition of duty, to pay any attention to the most important part of that system. They are not even required to think of anything but their own interest. The punishment and the reformation of convicts are only incidental results. It is trusted that the settler’s regard for his own interest will make him exact hard labour and good conduct from the servants assigned to him. But if indulgence is (as we have seen) likely to answer his purpose better than rigid discipline, he cannot even be upbraided with any breach of duty in resorting to it.

‘Of the many extraordinary features in this most marvellous specimen of legislation, it is one of the most paradoxical, that it intrusts a most important public service, in reference to the British nation, to men who are neither selected out of this nation on account of any supposed fitness to discharge it, nor

even taught to consider that they have any public duty to perform. Even in the most negligently-governed communities, the keeper of a house of correction is always, professedly at least, selected with some view to his integrity, discretion, firmness, and other qualifications; and however ill the selection may be conducted, he is at least taught to consider himself intrusted, for the public benefit, with an office which it is his duty to discharge on public grounds. However imperfectly all this may be accomplished, few persons would deny that it is, and ought to be, at least, aimed at. But this is not the case in the land of *ornithorhynchus paradoxus* and of other paradoxes. There, each settler is, as far as his own household is concerned, the keeper of a *house of correction*. To him, so far, is intrusted the punishment and the reformation of criminals. But he is not even called upon to look to these objects, except as they may incidentally further his own interest. He is neither expected nor exhorted to regulate his treatment of convicts with a view to the diminution of crime in the British Isles, but to the profits of his farm in Australia.

‘It is true, the settler may sometimes be, like other men, actuated by other feelings besides a regard to profit: but these feelings are not likely to be those of public spirit. When the convict does suffer hard usage, it is not much to be expected that this will be inflicted with a view to strike terror into offenders in Great Britain, or to effect any other salutary end of punishment. His treatment is likely to depend not so much on the character of the crime for which he was condemned, as on the character of his master. Accordingly, Colonel Arthur (p. 3), in enlarging on the miseries to which a convict is subjected, makes prominent mention of this, that ‘he is conveyed to a distant country, in the condition of a *slave*, and assigned to an unknown master, *whose disposition, temper, and even caprice*, he must consult at every turn, and submit to every moment.’

‘Colonel Arthur (p. 23), falls into an inaccuracy of language which tends to keep out of sight a most important practical distinction. He says: ‘With regard to the fact that convicts are treated as *slaves*, any difficulty that can be raised upon it must hold good whenever penitentiary or prison discipline is inflicted.’ If by a ‘slave’ be meant *any one who is subjected*

to the control of another, this is true. But the word is not in general thus applied. It is not usual to speak of children as *slaves* to their schoolmasters, or to their parents; or of prisoners being slaves of the jailer; or soldiers of their officers.—By slaves we generally understand, persons whom their master compels to work *for his own benefit*. And in this sense Colonel Arthur himself (p. 2) applies the term (I think very properly) to the assigned convict-servants.

‘It is observed by Homer, in the person of one of his characters in the *Odyssey*, that ‘a man loses half his virtue the day that he becomes a slave;’ he might have added with truth, that he is likely to lose more than half when he becomes a *slave-master*. And if the convict-servants and their masters have any virtue to lose, no system could have been devised more effectual for divesting them of it. Even the regular official jailers, and governors of penitentiaries, are in danger of becoming brutalized, unless originally men of firm good principle. And great wisdom in the contrivance of a penitentiary-system, and care in the conduct of it, are requisite, to prevent the hardening and debasing of the prisoners. But when both the superintendent and the convicts feel that they are held in bondage, and kept to work by him, not from any views of *public duty*, but avowedly for his *individual advantage*, nothing can be imagined more demoralizing to both parties.

‘Among all the extravagances that are recorded of capricious and half-insane despots in times of ancient barbarism, I do not remember any instance mentioned, of any one of these having thought of so mischievously absurd a project as that of forming a new nation, consisting of criminals and executioners.

‘But had such a tyrant existed, as should not only have devised such a plan, but should have insisted on his subjects believing, that a good moral effect would result from the intimate association together, in idleness, of several hundreds of reprobates, of various degrees of guilt, during a voyage of four or five months, and their subsequent assignment as slaves to various masters, under such a system as that just alluded to, it would have been doubted whether the mischievous insanity of wanton despotism could go a step beyond this. Another step however there is; and this is, the pretence of thus benefiting and civilizing the Aborigines! Surely those who expect the

men of our hemisphere to believe all this, must suppose us to entertain the ancient notion of the vulgar, that the *Antipodes* are people among whom everything is *reversed*. The mode of civilization practised, is of a piece with the rest.

‘They have (says one of the writers on the Colony) been *wantonly* butchered; and some of the christian (?) whites consider it a pastime to go out and shoot them. I questioned a person from Port Stephens concerning the disputes with the Aborigines of that part of the colony, and asked him, if he, or any of his companions, had ever come into collision with them; as I had heard there prevailed much enmity between the latter and the people belonging to the establishment? His answer was, ‘Oh, we used to shoot them like fun!’ It would have been a satisfaction to have seen such a heartless ruffian in an archery ground, with about a score of expert archers at a fair distance from him, if only to witness how well he would personify the representations of St. Sebastian. This man was a shrewd mechanic, and had been some years at Port Stephens. If such people consider the life of a black of so little value, how is it to be wondered at if the convicts entertain the same opinion? It is to be hoped that the practice of shooting them is at an end; but they are still subjected to annoyance from the stock-keepers, who take their women, and do them various injuries besides.’¹

‘But to waive for the present all discussion of the moral effects on the settlers, likely to result from the system, let it be supposed that the labour of convicts may be so employed as to advance the prosperity of the colony, and let it only be remembered that this object is likely to be pursued both by governors and settlers, at the expense of the other far more important one, which is inconsistent with it, the welfare of the mother-country, in respect of the repression of crime. This one consideration, apart from all others, would alone be decisive against transportation as a mode of *punishment*; since even if the system *could* be made efficient for that object, *supposing it to be well administered with a view to that*, there is a moral certainty that it never *will* be so administered.

‘If there be, as some have suggested, a certain description

¹ *Breton*, p. 200.

of offenders, to whom sentence of perpetual exile from their native country is especially formidable, this object might easily be attained, by erecting a penitentiary on some one of the many small, nearly unproductive, and unoccupied islands in the British seas; the conveyance to which would not occupy so many hours, as that to Australia does weeks.

‘But as for the attempt to combine salutary punishment with successful colonization, it only leads, in practice, to the failure of both objects; and, in the mind, it can only be effected by keeping up a fallacious confusion of ideas.’

In *Chambers’s Journal* (November, 1859) is a description of the state of society in Sydney, N.S. Wales. I know nothing of the writer, and cannot vouch for the correctness of the account. But it coincides very much with the anticipations I had formed above a quarter of a century before.

‘Consider likewise what commodities the soil where the
Plantation is doth naturally yield.’

The following humorous verses, descriptive of one of our Colonies, at the time when the ‘Assignment-system’ was in use, appeared first in *Bentley’s Miscellany*. It is not more paradoxical than true:—

‘THE LAND OF CONTRARIETIES.

‘There is a land in distant seas
Full of all contrarieties.
There beasts have mallards’ bills and legs,
Have spurs like cocks, like hens lay eggs.
There quadrupeds go on two feet,
And yet few quadrupeds so fleet:
And birds, although they cannot fly,
In swiftness with the greyhound vie.
With equal wonder you may see
The foxes fly from tree to tree;
And what they value most—so wary—
These foxes in their pockets carry.
There parrots walk upon the ground,
And grass upon the trees is found.

On other trees another wonder,
Leaves without upper side or under.
There apple-trees no fruit produce,
But from their trunks pour cid'rous juice.
The pears you'll scarce with hatchet cut ;
Stones are outside the cherries put ;
Swans are not white, but black as soot. }
There the voracious ewe-sheep crams
Her paunch with flesh of tender lambs.
There neither herb, nor root, nor fruit
Will any christian palate suit,
Unless in desp'rate need you'd fill ye
With root of fern and stalk of lily.
Instead of bread, and beef, and broth,
Men feast on many a roasted moth,
And find their most delicious food
In grubs picked out of rotten wood.
There birds construct them shady bowers,
Deck'd with bright feathers, shells, and flowers ;
To these the cocks and hens resort,
Run to and fro, and gaily sport.
Others a hot-bed join to make,
To hatch the eggs which they forsake.
There missiles to far distance sent
Come whizzing back with force unspent.
There courting swains their passion prove
By knocking down the girls they love.
There every servant gets his place
By character of foul disgrace.
There vice is virtue, virtue vice,
And all that's vile is voted nice.
The sun, when you to face him turn ye,
From right to left performs his journey.
The North winds scorch ; but when the breeze is
Full from the South, why then it freezes.
Now of what place can such strange tales
Be told with truth, but New South Wales ?'

'Above all, let men make that profit of being in the wilderness, that they have God always, and his service, before 'their eyes.'

Every settler in a foreign colony is, necessarily, more or less, a missionary to the aborigines—a missionary for good, or a missionary for evil,—operating upon them by his life and example.

It is often said that our colonies ought to provide for their own spiritual wants. But the more is done for them in this way, the more likely they will be to make such provision ; and the more they are neglected, the less likely they are to do it. It is the peculiar nature of the inestimable treasure of christian truth and religious knowledge, that the more it is withheld from people, the less they wish for it ; and the more is bestowed upon them, the more they hunger and thirst after it. If people are kept upon a short allowance of food, they are eager to obtain it ; if you keep a man thirsty, he will become more and more thirsty ; if he is poor, he is exceedingly anxious to become rich ; but if he is left in a state of spiritual destitution, after a time, he will, and still more his children, cease to feel it, and cease to care about it. It is the last want men can be trusted (in the first instance) to supply for themselves.

ESSAY XXXIV. OF RICHES.

I CANNOT call riches better than the baggage of virtue; the Roman word is better—*impedimenta*; ¹ for as the baggage is to an army, so is riches to virtue—it cannot be spared nor left behind, but it hindereth the march; yea, and the care of it sometimes loseth or disturbeth the victory. Of great riches there is no real use, except it be in the distribution; the rest is but conceit; so saith Solomon, ‘Where much is, there are many to consume it; and what hath the owner but the sight of it with his eyes?’ ² The personal fruition in any man cannot reach to feel great riches: there is a custody of them, or a power of dole, ³ and a donative of them, or a fame of them, but no solid use to the owner. Do you not see what feigned prices are set upon little stones and rarities—and what works of ostentation are undertaken, because ⁴ there might seem to be some use of great riches? But then, you will say, they may be of use to buy men out of dangers or troubles; as Solomon saith, ‘Riches are as a stronghold in the imagination of the rich man:’ ⁵ but this is excellently expressed, that it is in imagination, and not always in fact; for, certainly great riches have sold more men than they have bought out.

Seek not proud riches, but such as thou mayest get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly; yet have no abstract or friarly contempt of them, but distinguish, as Cicero saith well of Rabirius Posthumus, ‘In studio rei amplificandæ, apparebat, non avaritiæ prædam, sed instrumentum bonitati quæri.’ ⁶ Hearken also to Solomon, and beware of hasty gathering of riches: ‘Qui festinat ad divitias, non erit insons.’ ⁷ The poets feign that when Plutus (which is riches) is sent from Jupiter, he limps, and goes slowly, but when he is sent from Pluto, he runs, and is swift of foot;

¹ *Impedimenta. Hindrances.*

² *Eccles. v. 11.*

³ *Dole. A dealing out, or distribution.*

‘It was your pre-surmise,
That in the *dole* of blows, your son might drop.’

⁴ *Because. For the reason that; in order that. See page 285.*

⁵ *Proverbs x. 15; cf. xxviii. 11.*

⁶ ‘In his desire of increasing his riches, he sought not, it was evident, the gratification of avarice, but the means of beneficence.’—*Cic. P. Rabir. 2.*

⁷ ‘He that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent.’—*Prov. xxviii. 20.*

meaning, that riches gotten by good means and just labour pace slowly, but when they come by the death of others (as by the course of inheritance, testaments, and the like), they come tumbling upon a man: but it might be applied likewise to Pluto, taking him for the Devil; for when riches come from the Devil (as by fraud, and oppression, and unjust means) they come upon¹ speed. The ways to enrich are many, and most of them foul: parsimony is one of the best; and yet is not innocent, for it withholdeth men from works of liberality and charity. The improvement of the ground is the most natural obtaining of riches, for it is our great mother's blessing, the earth; but it is slow: and yet, where men of great wealth do stoop to husbandry, it multiplieth riches exceedingly. I knew a nobleman of England that had the greatest audits of any man in my time,—a great grazier, a great sheep master, a great timber man, a great collier, a great corn master, a great lead-man, and so of iron, and a number of the like points of husbandry; so as the earth seemed a sea to him in respect of the perpetual importation. It was truly observed by one, 'That himself came very hardly to little riches, and very easily to great riches;' for when a man's stock is come to that, that he can expect² the prime of markets, and overcome³ those bargains which for their greatness are few men's money, and be partner in the industries of younger men, he cannot but increase mainly.⁴ The gains of ordinary trades and vocations⁵ are honest, and furthered by two things, chiefly, by diligence, and by a good name for good and fair dealing; but the gains of bargains are of a more doubtful nature, when men shall wait upon others' necessity; broke⁶ by servants,

¹ Upon. *At.*

'Take upon command what help we have.'—*Shakespeare.*

² Expect. *To wait for.* 'Elihu had *expected* till Job had spoken.'—*Job* xxxii. 14 (marginal reading). '... *Expecting* till his enemies be made his footstool.'—*Heb.* x. 13.

³ Overcome. *Come upon.*

'Can such things be,
And overcome us, like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder?'—*Shakespeare.*

⁴ Mainly. *Greatly.*

'You *mainly* are stirred up.'—*Shakespeare.*

⁵ Vocation. See page 23.

⁶ Broke. *To traffic; to deal meanly.* 'This divine, contrary to his profession, took upon him to *broke* for him in such a manner as was never preceded by any.'—*Proceedings in the House of Commons against Bacon.*

and instruments to draw them on ; put off others cunningly that would be better chapmen,¹ and the like practices, which are crafty and naughty.² As for the chopping of bargains, when a man buys not to hold, but to sell over again, that commonly grindeth double, both upon the seller and upon the buyer. Sharings do greatly enrich, if the hands be well chosen that are trusted. Usury is the certainest means of gain, though one of the worst, as that whereby a man doth eat his bread, '*in sudore vultus alieni*,'³ and besides, doth plough upon Sundays : but yet certain though it be, it hath flaws : for that the scriveners and brokers do value⁴ unsound men, to serve their own turn. The fortune in being the first in an invention, or in a privilege, doth cause sometimes a wonderful overgrowth in riches ; as it was with the first sugar-man in the Canaries : therefore, if a man can play the true logician, to have as well judgment as invention, he may do great matters, especially if the times be fit. He that resteth upon gains certain, shall hardly grow to great riches ; and he that puts all upon adventures, doth oftentimes break and come to poverty : it is good, therefore, to guard adventures with certainties that may uphold losses. Monopolies, and coemption of wares for re-sale, where they are not restrained, are great means to enrich ; especially if the party have intelligence what things are like to come into request, and so store himself beforehand. Riches gotten by service, though it be of the best rise, yet when they are gotten by flattery, feeding humours, and other servile conditions, they may be placed amongst the worst. As for ' fishing for testaments and executorships,' (as Tacitus saith of Seneca, '*Testamenta et orbos tanquam indagine capi*,'⁵) it is yet worse, by how much men submit themselves to meaner persons than in service.

Believe not much them that seem to despise riches, for they despise them that despair of them ; and none worse, when they come to them. Be not penny-wise ; riches have wings, and sometimes they fly away of themselves, sometimes they must be

¹ Chapmen. *Purchasers.*

' Fair Diomedes, you do as *chapmen* do—
Dispraise the thing that they intend to buy.'—*Shakespeare.*

² Naught or Naughty. *Bad.* ' The water is *naught*, and the ground barren.'
—² *Kings* xi. 19. ³ ' In the sweat of another's brow.'

⁴ Value. *Represent as trustworthy.*

⁵ ' Wills and childless parents, taken as with a net.'—Tacit. *Ann.* xiii. 42.

set flying to bring in more. Men leave their riches either to their kindred, or to the Public; and moderate portions prosper best in both. A great estate left to an heir, is as a lure to all the birds of prey round about to seize on him, if he be not the better stablished¹ in years and judgment: likewise, glorious² gifts and foundations are like sacrifices without salt; and but the painted sepulchres of alms, which soon will putrefy and corrupt inwardly. Therefore measure not thine advancements³ by quantity, but frame them by measure: and defer not charities till death: for, certainly, if a man weigh it rightly, he that doth so is rather liberal of another man's than of his own.

ANTITHETA ON RICHES.

PRO.

'Divitias contemnunt, qui desperant.

'*Riches are despised by those who despair of obtaining them.*'

* * * *

'Dum philosophi dubitant utrum ad virtutem an ad voluptatem omnia sint referenda, collige instrumenta utriusque.

'*While philosophers are debating whether virtue or pleasure be the ultimate good, do you provide yourself with the instruments of both.*'

'Virtus per divitias vertitur in commune bonum.

'*It is by means of wealth that virtue becomes a public good.*'

* * * *

CONTRA.

'Divitiarum magnarum vel custodia est, vel dispensatio quædam, vel fama; at nullus usus.

'*Great wealth is a thing either to be guarded, or dispensed, or displayed; but which cannot be used.*'

'Non aliud divitias dixerim, quam impedimenta virtutis; nam virtuti et necessariæ sunt et graves.

'*Riches are neither more nor less than the baggage of virtue; for they are at once necessary and inconvenient appendages to it.*'

'Multi, dum divitiis suis omnia venalia fore crediderunt, ipsi imprimis venerunt.

'*Many who think that everything may be bought with their own wealth, have been bought themselves first.*'

'Divitiæ bona ancilla, pessima domina.

'*Wealth is a good handmaid, but a bad mistress.*'

¹ Stablish. *To establish.* 'Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father . . . comfort your hearts, and *stablish* you in every good word and work.'—2 *Thess.* xi. 16, 17.

'Stop effusion of our christian blood,
And *stablish* quietness on every side.'—*Shakespeare.*

² Glorious. *Splendid.*

'Were not this *glorious* casket stored.'—*Shakespeare.*

Bacon's Latin original is—'Fundationes gloriosæ et splendide in usus publicos.'

³ Advancement. *Advances; gifts in money or property.* 'The jointure and advancement of the lady was the third part of the Principality of Wales.'—Bacon's *Hist.*

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'I cannot call riches better than the baggage of virtue ; the Roman word is better, impedimenta it hindereth the march.'

In reference to the effect on the character, both of individuals and nations, of wealth and poverty, I will take leave to insert some extracts from the *Lectures on Political Economy*.

'We should attend to the distinction between an *individual* and a *community*, when viewed as possessing a remarkable share of wealth. The two cases differ immensely, as far as the moral effects of wealth are concerned. For, first, the most besetting, probably, of all the temptations, to which a rich *man*, as such, is exposed, is that of pride—an arrogant disdain of those poorer than himself. Now, as all our ideas of great and small, in respect of wealth, and of everything else, are comparative, and as each man is disposed to compare himself with those around him, it is plain, the danger of priding one's self on wealth, affects exclusively, or nearly so, an *individual* who is rich, compared with his own countrymen ; and especially one who is richer than most others in his own walk of life, and who reside in his own neighbourhood. Some degree of national pride there may be, connected with national wealth ; but this is not in general near so much the foundation of national pride as a supposed superiority in valour, or in mental cultivation : and at any rate it seldom comes into play. An Englishman who is poor, compared with other Englishmen, is not likely to be much puffed up with pride at the thought of belonging to a wealthy community. Nay, even though he should himself possess property which, among the people of Timbuctoo, or the aboriginal Britons, would be reckoned great wealth, he will be more likely to complain of his poverty, than to be filled with self-congratulation at his wealth, if most of those of his own class are as rich or richer than himself. And even one who travels or resides abroad, does not usually regard with disdain (on the score of wealth at least) those foreigners who are individually as well off in that respect as himself, though their *nation* may be poorer than his. And, on the other hand, those individuals who, in a

poor country, are comparatively rich, are quite as much exposed as any to the temptation of pride.

‘As for what may be said respecting avarice, selfishness, worldly-mindedness, &c., it may suffice to reply, that not only these vices are found as commonly in poor *countries* as in rich, but even in the same country the poor are not at all less liable to them than the rich. Those in affluent circumstances *may* be absorbed in the pursuit of gain; but they *may* also, and sometimes do, devote themselves altogether to literature, or science, or other pursuits, altogether remote from this: those, on the other hand, who *must* maintain themselves by labour or attention to business, are at least not the *less* liable to the temptation of too anxiously taking thought for the morrow.

‘Luxury, again, is one of the evils represented as consequent on wealth. The word is used in so many senses, and so often without attaching any precise meaning to it, that great confusion is apt to be introduced into any discussion in which it occurs. Without, however, entering prematurely on any such discussion, it may be sufficient, as far as the present question is concerned, to point out that the terms luxury, and luxurious, are considerably modified as to their force, according as they are applied to individuals or to nations. As an individual, a *man* is called luxurious, in comparison with other men, of the same community and in the same walk of life with himself: a nation is called luxurious in reference to other *nations*. The same style of living which would be reckoned moderate and frugal, or even penurious among the higher orders, would be censured as extravagant luxury in a day-labourer: and the labourer, again, if he lives in a cottage with glass-windows and a chimney, and wears shoes and stockings, and a linen or cotton shirt, is not said to live in luxury, though he possesses what would be thought luxuries to a negro-prince. A rich and luxurious nation, therefore, does not necessarily contain more individuals who live in luxury (according to the received use of the word) than a poor one; but it possesses more of such things as *would* be luxuries in the poor country, while in the rich one they are not. The inclination for self-indulgence and ostentation is not necessarily less strong in poor than in rich nations; the chief difference is, that their luxury is of a coarser description, and generally has

more connexion with gross sensuality. Barbarians are almost invariably intemperate.

‘As for the effeminizing effects that have been attributed to national luxury, which has been charged with causing a decay of national energy, mental and bodily, no such results appear traceable to any such cause. Xenophon, indeed, attributes the degeneracy of the Persians to the inroads of luxury, which was carried, he says, to such a pitch of effeminacy, that they even adopted the use of gloves to protect their hands. We probably have gone as much beyond them, in respect of the *common* style of living among us, as they, beyond their rude forefathers; yet it will hardly be maintained that this nation displays, in the employments either of war or peace, less bodily or mental energy than our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. In bodily strength, it has been ascertained by accurate and repeated experiments, that civilized men are decidedly superior to savages; and that the *more* barbarian, and those who lead a harder life, are generally inferior in this point to those who have made more approaches to civilization. There is, indeed, in such a country as this, a larger proportion of feeble and sickly individuals; but this is because the hardship and exposure of a savage life speedily destroy those who are not of a robust constitution. Some there are, no doubt, whose health is impaired by an over-indulgent and tender mode of life; but as a general rule it may safely be maintained, that the greater part of that over-proportion of infirm persons among us, as compared, for instance, with some wild North American tribe, owe, not their infirmity, but their *life*, to the difference between our habits and those of savages. How much the average duration of human life has progressively increased in later times, is probably well-known to most persons.

‘Lastly, one of the most important points of distinction between *individuals* and *nations* in respect to wealth, is that which relates to industry and idleness. Rich *men*, though they are indeed often most laboriously and honourably active, yet *may*, and sometimes do, spend their lives in such idleness as cannot be found among the poor, excepting in the class of beggars. A rich *nation*, on the contrary, is always an industrious nation; and almost always more industrious than poor ones.’

. . . . 'Among poor and barbarian nations we may find as much avarice, fraud, vanity, and envy, called forth, in reference perhaps to a string of beads, a hatchet, or a musket, as are to be found in wealthier communities.'

. . . . 'The savage is commonly found to be covetous, frequently rapacious, when his present inclination impels him to seek any object which he needs, or which his fancy is set on. He is not indeed so *steady* or so *provident*, in his pursuit of gain, as the civilized man; but this is from the general unsteadiness and improvidence of his character,—not from his being engrossed in higher pursuits. What keeps him poor, in addition to want of skill and insecurity of property, is not a philosophical contempt of riches, but a love of sluggish torpor and of present gratification. The same may be said of such persons as constitute the dregs of a civilized community; they are idle, thoughtless, improvident, but thievish. Lamentable as it is to see, as we may, for instance, in our own country, multitudes of Beings of such high qualifications and such high destination as Man, absorbed in the pursuit of merely external and merely temporal objects—occupied in schemes for attaining wealth and worldly aggrandizement, without any higher views in pursuing them,—we must remember that the savage is not *above* such a life, but *below* it. It is not from preferring virtue to wealth—the goods of the mind to those of fortune—the next world to the present—that he takes so little thought for the morrow; but, from want of forethought and of habitual self-command. The civilized man, too often, directs these qualities to an unworthy object; the savage, universally, is deficient in the qualities themselves. The one is a stream, flowing, too often, in a wrong channel, and which needs to have its course altered; the other is a stagnant pool.'¹

'There is one antecedent presumption that the advancement in national wealth should be, on the whole, favourable to moral improvement, from what we know of the divine dispensations, both ordinary and extraordinary. I am aware what caution is called for in any attempt to reason *à priori* from our notions of the character and designs of the Supreme Being. But in this case there is a clear *analogy* before us. We know that God

¹ See Lecture on the *Origin of Civilization*.

placed the human species in such a situation, and endued them with such faculties and propensities, as would infallibly tend to the advancement of society in wealth, and in all the arts of life; instead of either creating Man a different kind of Being, or leaving him in that wild and uninstructed state, from which he could never have emerged. Now if the natural consequence of this advancement be a continual progress from bad to worse—if the increase of wealth, and the development of the intellectual powers, tend not to the improvement, but rather to the depravation, of the moral character—we may safely pronounce this to be at variance with all analogy,—a complete reversal of every other appointment that we see throughout creation.

‘And it is completely at variance with the revealed Will of God. For, the great impediments to the progress I am speaking of are, war, and dissension of every kind,—insecurity of property—indolence, and neglect of providing for ourselves, and for those dependent on us. Now, God has forbidden Man to kill, and to steal; He has inculcated on him gentleness, honesty, submission to lawful authority, and industry in providing for his own household. If therefore the advancement in national wealth,—which is found to be, by the appointment of Providence, the result of obedience to these precepts—if, I say, this advancement naturally tends to counteract that improvement of the moral character, which the same God has pointed out to us as the great business of this life, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion, that He has given contradictory commands,—that He has directed us to pursue a course of action, which leads to an end the very opposite of what we are required by Himself to aim at.’

‘But the opposite conclusion is, surely, much more in accordance with reason and experience, as well as with every rational wish, that as the Most High has evidently formed society with a tendency to advancement in national wealth, so, He has designed and fitted us to advance, by means of that, in virtue, and true wisdom, and happiness.’

‘Believe not much them that seem to despise riches.’

‘The declaimers on the incompatibility of wealth and virtue are mere declaimers, and nothing more. For, you will often

find them, in the next breath, applauding or condemning every measure or institution, according to its supposed tendency to increase or diminish wealth. You will find them not only readily accepting wealth themselves from any honourable source, and anxious to secure from poverty their children and all most dear to them (for this might be referred to the prevalence of passion over principle), but even offering up solemn prayers to Heaven for the prosperity of their native country; and contemplating with joy a flourishing condition of her agriculture, manufactures, or commerce; in short, of the sources of her wealth. Seneca's discourses in praise of poverty would, I have no doubt, be rivalled by many writers of this island, if one half of the revenues he drew from the then inhabitants of it, by lending them money at high interest, were proposed as a prize. Such declaimers against wealth resemble the Harpies of Virgil, seeking to excite disgust at the banquet of which they are themselves eager to partake.'

'Have no abstract or friarly contempt of them.'

'The goods of this world are not at all a trifling concern to Christians, considered *as* Christians. Whether, indeed, we ourselves shall have enjoyed a large or a small share of them, will be of no importance to us a hundred years hence; but it will be of the greatest importance whether we shall have employed the faculties and opportunities granted to us, in the increase and diffusion of those benefits among others. For, in regard to wealth, as well as all those objects which the great moralist of antiquity places in the class of things good in themselves, (ἀπλῶς ἀγαθὰ), more depends, as he himself remarks,¹ on the use we make of these bounties of Providence, than on the advantages themselves. They *are*, in themselves, goods; and it is our part, instead of affecting ungratefully to slight or to complain of God's gifts, to endeavour to make them *goods to us* (ἡμῖν ἀγαθὰ), by studying to use them aright, and to promote, through them, the best interests of ourselves and our fellow-creatures. Every situation in which Man can be placed has, along with its own peculiar advantages, its own peculiar

¹ Arist. *Eth.* b. v. c. 3.

difficulties and trials also ; which we are called on to exert our faculties in providing against. The most fertile soil does not necessarily bear the most abundant harvest ; its weeds, if neglected, will grow the rankest. And the servant who has received but one talent, if he put it out to use, will fare better than he who has been intrusted with five, if he squander or bury them. But still, this last does not suffer *because* he received five talents ; but because he has not used them to advantage.'

ESSAY XXXV. OF PROPHECIES.

I MEAN not to speak of divine prophecies, nor of heathen oracles, nor of natural predictions, but only of prophecies that have been of certain memory, and from hidden causes. Saith the Pythonissa¹ to Saul, 'To-morrow thou and thy sons shall be with me.'² Virgil hath these verses from Homer :

'At domus Æneæ cunctis dominabitur oris,
Et nati natorum, et qui nascentur ab illis ;'³

a prophecy, as it seems, of the Roman empire. Seneca the tragedian hath these verses :

'Venient annis
Sæcula seris, quibus Oceanus
Vincula rerum laxet, et ingens
Pateat tellus, Tiphysque novos
Detegat orbes ; nec sit terris
Ultima Thule :'⁴

a prophecy of the discovery of America. The daughter of Polycrates dreamed that Jupiter bathed her father, and Apollo anointed him ; and it came to pass that he was crucified in an open place, where the sun made his body run with sweat, and the rain washed it.⁵ Philip of Macedon⁶ dreamed he sealed up his wife's belly ; whereby he did expound it, that his wife should be barren ; but Aristander the soothsayer told him his wife was with child, because men do not use to seal vessels that are empty. A phantom that appeared to M. Brutus in his tent, said to him, 'Philippis iterum me videbis.'⁷ Tiberius said to Galba, 'Tu quoque, Galba, degustabis imperium.'⁸ In Vespasian's time there went a prophecy in the East, that those that should come forth of Judea should reign over the world ; which, though it may be was meant of our Saviour, yet Tacitus

¹ Pythonissa. *Pythoness*.

² i *Sam.* xxviii. 19.

³ 'Over every shore the house of Æneas shall reign ; his children's children, and their posterity likewise.'—*Æneid*, iii. 97.

⁴ 'There shall come a time, in later ages, when Ocean shall relax his chains, and a vast continent appear ; and a pilot shall find new worlds, and Thule shall be no more earth's bound.'—*Sen. Med.* xi. 375.

⁵ *Hesiod*, iii. 24.

⁶ *Plut. Vit. Alexan.* 2.

⁷ 'Thou shalt see me again at Philippi.'—*Appian, Bell. Civ.* iv. 134.

⁸ 'Thou, also, Galba, shalt taste of empire.'—*Stat. Vit. Galba*.

expounds it of Vespasian.¹ Domitian dreamed, the night before he was slain, that a golden head was growing out of the nape of his neck;² and, indeed, the succession that followed him, for many years, made golden times. Henry VI. of England said of Henry VII. when he was a lad, and gave him water, 'This is the lad that shall enjoy the crown for which we strive.' When I was in France, I heard from one Dr. Pena, that the queen-mother, who was given to curious arts, caused the king her husband's nativity to be calculated under a false name, and the astrologer gave a judgment that he should be killed in a duel; at which the queen laughed, thinking her husband to be above challenges and duels; but he was slain upon a course at tilt, the splinters of the staff of Montgomery going in at his beaver. The trivial prophecy which I heard when I was a child, and Queen Elizabeth was in the flower of her years, was,

'When hempe is spun,
England's done.'

whereby it was generally conceived, that after the princes had reigned which had the principal letters of that word hempe, which were Henry, Edward, Mary, Philip, and Elizabeth, England should come to utter confusion; which, thanks be to God, is verified in the change of the name, for the king's style is now no more of England, but of Britain. There was also another prophecy before the year of eighty-eight, which I do not well understand:

'There shall be seen upon a day,
Between the Baugh³ and the May,
The Black fleet of Norway.
When that is come and gone,
England build houses of lime and stone,
For after wars shall you have none.'

It was generally conceived to be meant of the Spanish fleet that came in eighty-eight; for that the king of Spain's surname, as they say, is Norway. The prediction of Regiomontanus,

'Octogesimus octavus mirabilis annus;'⁴

was thought likewise accomplished in the sending of that great

¹ Tacit. *Hist.* v. 13.

³ Baugh. *Bough* (probably).

² Suet. *Vit. Domit.* 23.

⁴ 'Eighty-eight, a wonderful year.'

fleet, being the greatest in strength, though not in number, of all that ever swam upon the sea. As for Cleon's dream,¹ I think it was a jest—it was, that he was devoured of² a long dragon; and it was expounded of a maker of sausages, that troubled him exceedingly. There are numbers of the like kind, especially if you include dreams, and predictions of astrology; but I have set down these few only of certain credit, for example.

My judgment is, that they ought all to be despised, and ought to serve but for winter-talk by the fireside. Though when I say despised, I mean it as for belief—for otherwise, the spreading or publishing of them is in no sort to be despised—for they have done much mischief, and I see many severe laws made to suppress them. That that hath given them grace, and some credit, consisteth in three things. First, that men mark when they hit, and never mark when they miss; as they do, generally, also of dreams. The second is, that probable conjectures, or obscure traditions, many times turn themselves into prophecies: while the nature of Man, which coveteth divination, thinks it no peril to foretell that which indeed they do but collect, as that of Seneca's verse; for so much was then subject to demonstration, that the globe of the earth had great parts beyond the Atlantic, which might be probably conceived not to be all sea, and adding thereto the tradition in Plato's *Timæus* and his *Atlanticus*,³ it might encourage one to turn it to a prediction. The third and last, which is the great one, is, that almost all of them, being infinite in number, have been impostures, and by idle and crafty brains, merely contrived and feigned, after the event past.

¹ Aristoph. *Equit.* 195.

² Of. *By.* 'Lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him.'—*Luke* xiv. 8.

³ *Critias.*

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*'The spreading or publishing of them is in no sort to be despised ;
for they have done much mischief.'*

A political prediction, publicly uttered, will often have had, or be supposed to have had, a great share in bringing about its own fulfilment. Accordingly, when a law is actually passed, and there is *no reasonable hope of its repeal*, we should be very cautious in publicly uttering predictions of dangers and discontents, lest we should thus become the means of engendering or aggravating them. He who gives out, for instance, that the people will certainly be dissatisfied with such and such a law, is in this doing his utmost to *make* them dissatisfied. And this being the case in all unfavourable, as well as favourable, predictions, some men lose their deserved credit for political sagacity, through their fear of contributing to produce the evils they apprehend ; while others, again, contribute to evil results by their incapacity to keep their anticipations locked up in their own bosoms, and by their dread of not obtaining deserved credit. It would be desirable to provide for such men a relief like that which the servant of King Midas found ; due care, however, being taken that there should be no whispering reeds to divulge it.

In another 'New Atlantis,' entitled *An Expedition to the Interior of New Holland*,¹ a Prediction-office is supposed to exist in several of the States ; namely, an establishment consisting of two or three inspectors, and a few clerks, appointed to receive from any one, on payment of a trifling fee, any sealed-up *prediction*, to be opened at a time specified by the party himself. His name is to be signed to the prediction *within* ; and on the outer cover is inscribed the date of its delivery, and the time when the seal is to be broken. There is no pretence made to supernatural prophetic powers ; only to supposed political sagacity.

¹ Published by Bentley.

Unless in some case in which very remarkable sagacity has been evinced, the predictions are not made public. But previously to the appointment of any of the authors to any public office, the inspectors are bound to look over their register, and produce, as a set-off against a candidate's claims, any unsuccessful prediction he may have made. Many a man there is to whom important public trusts are committed, who, wherever such an institution had been established, would be found to have formally recorded, under the influence of self-conceit, his own incapacity.

'Probable conjectures many times turn themselves into prophecies.'

Yet there have been some which will hardly admit of this explanation. Such is that concerning the Empress Josephine, which is said to be well-attested. She had her fortune told, it is said, in the West Indies, when a girl, by an *Obi-woman* (as the negroes call them), who told her that she would rise to be *greater than a queen*, but would die in an *hospital*. After her divorce, she lived and died at Malmaison, a house which had formerly been an hospital.

'Men mark when they hit, and never mark when they miss.'

This remark, as well as the proverb, 'What is hit is history; what is missed is mystery,' would admit of much generalization. The most general statement would be nearly that of the law-maxim, 'De non apparentibus et non existentibus, eadem est ratio;' for in all matters, men are apt to treat as altogether non-existent, whatever does not come under their knowledge or notice.

No doubt, if all the pocket-books now existing could be inspected, some thousands of memoranda would be found of dreams, visions, omens, presentiments, &c., kept to observe whether they are fulfilled; and when one is, out of some hundreds of thousands, this is recorded; the rest being never heard of. So Bion, when shown the votive offerings of those who had been saved from shipwreck, asked, 'Where are the records of those who were drowned in spite of their vows?'

Mr. Senior has remarked in his *Lectures on Political Economy*, that the sacrifice of vast wealth, on the part of a whole people, for the gain—and that, comparatively, a trifling gain—of a handful of monopolists, is often submitted to patiently,¹ from the gain being *concentrated* and the loss diffused. But this would not have occurred so often as it has, were it not that this diffusion of the loss causes its existence—that is, its existence as a loss so incurred—to be *unperceived*. If a million of persons are each virtually taxed half-a-crown a year in the increased price of some article, through the prohibition of free-trade, perhaps not above a shilling of this goes to those who profit by the monopoly. But this million of shillings, amounting to £50,000 per annum, is divided, perhaps, among fifty persons, who clearly *perceive* whence their revenue is derived; and who, when an income of £1000 is at stake, will combine together, and use every effort and artifice to keep up the monopoly. The losers, on the other hand, not only have, each, much less at stake, but are usually *ignorant* that they do lose by this monopoly; else they would not readily submit to pay half-a-crown, or even one shilling, as a direct *pension* to fifty men who had no claim on them.

Again, an English gentleman who lives on his estate, is considered as a public benefactor, not only by exerting himself—if he does so—in promoting sound religion, and pure morality, and useful knowledge, in his neighbourhood, but also because his income is spent in furnishing employment to his *neighbours*, as domestics, and bakers, and carpenters, &c. If he removes and resides in France, his income is, in fact, spent on English cutlers and clothiers; since it is their products that are exported to France, and virtually exchanged—though in a slightly circuitous way,—for the services of French domestics, bakers, and carpenters. But the Sheffield cutlers are not aware even of his existence; while the neighbours of the resident proprietor trace distinctly to him the profits they derive from him.

Again, one who unprofitably consumes in feasts, and fireworks, and fancy-gardens, &c., the labour of many men, is regarded as a public benefactor, in furnishing employment to so many; though it is plain, that all unproductive consumption

¹ See 'Annotations' on Essay XXIII.

diminishes by just so much the wealth of the country. He, on the contrary, who hoards up his money as a miser, is abused ; though in fact he is (though without any such design) contributing to the public wealth, by lending at interest all he saves ; which finds its way, directly or indirectly, to canals, commerce, manufactures, and other *productive* courses of expenditure. But this benefit to the Public no one can *trace* ; any more than we can trace each of the drops of rain that find their way into the sea. On the other hand, the advantage to the individuals to whom the other is a customer, they distinctly trace to him.

Again, the increased knowledge of ‘accidents and offences,’ conveyed through newspapers, in a civilized country, leads some to fancy that these evils *occur* more frequently, because they hear of them more, than in times of ‘primitive simplicity.’ But ‘there are no more particles of dust in the sun-beam than in the rest of the room ; though we *see* them better.’

All these, and a multitude of other cases, come under the general formula above stated : the tendency to overrate the amount of whatever is seen and known, as compared with what is unknown, or less known, unseen, and indefinite.

Under this head will come the general tendency to under-rate the *preventive* effects of any measure or system, whether for good or for evil. *E. g.* in the prevention of crime, it is plain that every instance of a crime committed, and of a penalty actually inflicted, is an instance of *failure* in the object for which penalties were denounced. We *see* the crimes that do take place, and the punishments ; we do *not* see the crimes that *would* be committed if punishment were abolished.

ESSAY XXXVI. OF AMBITION.

AMBITION is like choler, which is a humour that maketh men active, earnest, full of alacrity, and stirring, if it be not stopped ; but if it be stopped, and cannot have its way, it becometh adust,¹ and thereby malign and venomous ; so ambitious men, if they find the way open for their rising, and still get forward, they are rather busy than dangerous ; but if they be checked in their desires, they become secretly discontent,² and look upon men and matters with an evil eye, and are best pleased when things go backward ; which is the worst property in a servant of a prince or State. Therefore, it is good for princes, if they use ambitious men, to handle it so as they be still progressive and not retrograde ; which, because it cannot be without inconvenience, it is good not to use such natures at all ; for if they rise not with their service, they will take order³ to make their service fall with them. But since we have said, it were good not to use men of ambitious natures, except it be upon necessity, it is fit to speak in what cases they are of necessity. Good commanders in the wars must be taken, be they never so ambitious ; for the use of their service dispenseth⁴ with the rest ; and to take a soldier without ambition is to pull off his spurs. There is also great use of ambitious men in being screens to princes in matters of danger and envy ; for no man will take that part except he be like a seeled⁵ dove, that mounts and mounts,

¹ Adust. *Fiery.*

‘The same *adust* complexion has impelled
Charles to the convent, Philip to the field.’—*Pope.*

² Discontent. *Discontented.*

‘For e’en with goodness men grow *discontent*,
Where states are ripe to fall, and virtue spent.’—*Daniel.*

³ Order. *Measures.*

‘While I take *order* for mine own affairs.’—*Shakespeare.*

⁴ Dispense with. *To excuse.*

‘To save a brother’s life,
Nature *dispenseth* with the deed.’

⁵ Seel. *To seal up the eyes ; to hoodwink ; to blind.* (A term of falconry.)

‘To *seel* her father’s eyes up, close as oak.’—*Shakespeare.*

because he cannot see about him. There is use also of ambitious men in pulling down the greatness of any subject that overtops; as Tiberius used Macro in the pulling down of Sejanus. Since, therefore, they must be used in such cases, there resteth¹ to speak how they are to be bridled, that they may be less dangerous. There is less danger of them, if they be of mean birth, than if they be noble; and if they be rather harsh of nature, than gracious and popular; and if they be rather new raised, than grown cunning² and fortified in their greatness. It is counted by some a weakness in princes to have favourites, but it is, of all others, the best remedy against ambitious great ones; for when the way of pleasuring³ and displeasuring⁴ lieth by the favourite, it is impossible any other should be over great. Another means to curb them, is to balance them by others as proud as they; but then there must be some middle counsellors to keep things steady, for without that ballast, the ship will roll too much. At the least, a prince may animate and inure⁵ some meaner persons to be scourges to ambitious men. As for the having of them obnoxious⁶ to ruin, if they be of fearful natures, it may do well, but if they be stout and daring, it may precipitate their designs, and prove dangerous. As for the pulling of them down, if the affairs require it, and that it may not be done with safety suddenly, the only way is, the interchange continually of favours and

¹ Rest. *To remain.*

‘Fallen he is; and now
What *rests* but that the mortal sentence pass
On his transgression.’—*Milton.*

² Cunning. *Experienced; skilful.* ‘Esau was a *cunning* hunter.’—*Gen.* xxv. 27.

³ Pleasure (not used as a verb). *To please; to gratify.* ‘Promising both to give him cattle, and to *pleasure* him otherwise.’—2 *Maccabees* xii. 11.

‘Nay, the birds’ rural music, too,
Is as melodious and as free
As if they sang to *pleasure* you.’—*Cowley.*

⁴ Displeasure. *To displease.*

⁵ Inure. *To make use of.* (From an old word—‘ure.’) ‘Is the warrant sufficient for any man’s conscience to build such proceedings upon, as are and have been put in *ure* for the establishment of that cause?’—*Hooker.*

⁶ Obnoxious. *Liable to; in peril of; subject to.*

‘But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to? Who aspires, must down as low
As high he soar’d; *obnoxious*, first or last,
To basest things.’—*Milton.*

disgraces,¹ whereby they may not know what to expect, and be, as it were, in a wood. Of ambitions, it is less harmful,² the ambition to prevail in great things, than that other, to appear in every thing; for that breeds confusion, and mars business; but yet it is less danger to have an ambitious man stirring in business, than great in dependencies.³ He that seeketh to be eminent amongst able men, hath a great task, but that is ever good for the Public; but he that plots to be the only figure amongst cyphers, is the decay of a whole age.

Honour hath three things in it; the vantage ground to do good, the approach to kings and principal persons, and the raising of a man's own fortunes. He that hath the best of these intentions, when he aspireth, is an honest man; and that prince that can discern of these intentions in another that aspireth, is a wise prince. Generally, let princes and States chuse such ministers as are more sensible of duty than of rising, and such as love business rather upon conscience than upon bravery;⁴ and let them discern a busy nature from a willing mind.

ANNOTATION.

'The vantage-ground to do good.'

Ambition, meaning a desire to occupy a high station for which one thinks himself fit, is not, in itself, anything bad. But its excess being thought much more common, and being certainly much more *conspicuous*, than a deficiency, and having done so much mischief in the world—hence, ambition is commonly regarded as a mere evil. And if all men were both infallible judges of their own, and of other men's qualifications,

¹ Disgraces. *Acts of unkindness; repulses.* 'Her disgraces to him were graced by her excellence.'—*Sir Philip Sidney.*

² Harmful. *Hurtful.* See page 91.

³ Dependencies. *Things or persons under command, or at disposal.* 'The second natural division of power, is of such men who have acquired large possessions, and consequently, dependencies.'—*Swift.*

⁴ Bravery. *Ostentation; parade.*

'The *bravery* of his grief did put me into a towering passion.'—*Shakespeare.*

and also completely devoted to the public good, and utterly regardless of personal inconvenience and toil, it would be well that there should be no such thing as ambition. But as things are, an excessive dread of indulging ambition, or of being suspected of it, may keep back some from acting a great and useful part for which they were well fitted. Thus, some have thought that it would have been well for America if Washington had had enough ambition to have made himself perpetual President, and established the office as hereditary.

ESSAY XXXVII. OF MASQUES¹ AND TRIUMPHS.²

THESE things are but toys to come amongst such serious observations; but yet, since princes will have such things, it is better they should be graced with elegance,³ than daubed with cost. Dancing to song is a thing of great state and pleasure. I understand it that the song be in quire, placed aloft, and accompanied with some broken music, and the ditty⁴ fitted to the device. Acting in song, especially in dialogues, hath an extreme good grace—I say acting, not dancing (for that is a mean and vulgar thing); and the voices of the dialogue would⁵ be strong and manly (a bass and a tenor, no treble), and the ditty high and tragical, not nice⁶ or dainty.⁷ Several quires placed one over against another, and taking the voice by catches, anthem-wise,⁸ give great pleasure. Turning dances into figure is a childish curiosity; and generally let it be noted, that those things which I here set down, are such as do naturally take the sense, and not respect petty wonderments.⁹ It is true, the alterations of scenes, so it be quietly and without noise, are things of great beauty and pleasure; for they feed and relieve the eye before it be full of the same object. Let

¹ Masque. *A dramatic performance on festive occasions.* ‘Comus. *A masque* presented at Ludlow Castle, 1634.’

² Triumphs. *Public shows.*

‘What news from Oxford? Hold those justs and *triumphs*!’—*Shakespeare.*

³ Elegancy. *Elegance.* ‘St. Augustine, out of a kind of *elegancy* in writing, makes some difference.’—*Raleigh.*

⁴ Ditty. *A poem to be sung.* (Now only used in burlesque.)

‘Meanwhile the rural *ditties* were not mute,
Tempered to the oaten flute.’—*Milton.*

⁵ Would. *Should.* See page 352.

⁶ Nice. *Minutely accurate.*

‘The letter was not *nice*, but full of charge
Of dear import.’—*Shakespeare.*

⁷ Dainty. *Affectedly fine.*

‘Your *dainty* speakers have the curse,
To plead bad causes down to worse.’—*Prior.*

⁸ Wise. *Ways; manner or mode.* (Seldom now used as a simple word.)

‘This song she sings in most commanding *wise*.’—*Spenser.*

⁹ Wonderment. *Astonishment; surprise.*

‘Ravished with Fancy’s *wonderment*.’—*Spenser.*

the scenes abound with light, especially coloured and varied; and let the masquers, or any other that are to come down from the scene, have some motions upon the scene itself before their coming down; for it draws the eye strangely, and makes it with great pleasure to desire to see that¹ it cannot perfectly discern. Let the songs be loud and cheerful, and not chirpings or pulings;² let the music likewise be sharp and loud, and well placed. The colours that show best by candle-light are white, carnation, and a kind of sea-water green; and ouches,³ or spangs,⁴ as they are of no great cost, so they are of most glory.⁵ As for rich embroidery, it is lost and not discerned. Let the suits of the masquers be graceful, and such as become the person when the vizards⁶ are off, not after examples of known attires, Turks, soldiers, mariners, and the like. Let anti-masques⁷ not be long; they have been commonly of fools, satyrs, baboons, wild men, antics,⁸ beasts, sprites,⁹ witches, Æthiopes,¹⁰

¹ That. *What.* See page 82.

² Puling. *Whining.*

‘To speak *puling*, like a beggar at Halimass.’—*Shakespeare.*

³ Ouches. *Ornaments of gold in which jewels may be set.* ‘Thou shalt make the two stones to be set in ouches of gold.’—*Exodus* xxviii. 11.

⁴ Spangs. *Spangles.*

‘A vesture sprinkled, here and there,
With glittering *spangs* that did like stars appere.’—*Spenser.*

⁵ Glory. *Lustre.*

‘The moon, serene in *glory.*’—*Pope.*

⁶ Vizard—Visor. *A mask used to disguise.* ‘A lie is like a *vizard*, that may cover the face, indeed, but can never become it.’—*South.*

⁷ Anti-masques. *Short masques, or light interludes, played between the parts of the principal masques.*

⁸ Antics. *Buffoons.*

‘If you should smile, he grows impatient,—
Fear not, my Lord; we can contain ourselves,
Were he the veriest *antick* in the world.’—*Shakespeare.*

‘Within the hollow crown
That rounds the mortal temples of a king
Keeps Death his court: and there the *antick* sits,
Scoffing his state.’—*Shakespeare.*

⁹ Sprites. *Spirits.*

‘And forth he call’d out of deep darkness drear
Legions of *sprites.*’—*Spenser.*

‘Of these am I who thy protection claim,
A watchful *sprite*, and Ariel is my name.’—*Pope.*

¹⁰ Ethiops. *Ethiopians; blacks.*

‘Since her time colliers are counted fair,
And *Ethiops* of their sweet complexion crack.’—*Shakespeare.*

pigmies, turquets,¹ nymphs, rustics, Cupids, statues moving, and the like. As for angels, it is not comical² enough to put them in anti-masques; and anything that is hideous, as devils, giants, is, on the other side, as unfit; but chiefly, let the music of them be recreative, and with some strange changes. Some sweet odours suddenly coming forth, without any drops falling, are, in such a company, as there is steam and heat, things of great pleasure and refreshment. Double masques, one of men, another of ladies, addeth state and variety; but all is nothing, except the room be kept clear and neat.

For justs, and tourneys,³ and barriers, the glories⁴ of them are chiefly in the chariots, wherein the challengers make their entry, especially if they be drawn with strange beasts, as lions, bears, camels, and the like; or, in the devices of their entrance, or in bravery⁵ of their liveries, or in the goodly furniture of their horses and armour. But enough of these toys.

ANNOTATION.

'These things are but toys . . . ?'

Bacon seems to think some kind of apology necessary for treating of matters of this kind in the midst of grave treatises. But his taste seems to have lain a good deal this way. He is reported to have always shown a great fondness for splendour and pageantry, and everything that could catch the eye, and

¹ Turquets. (Probably) *Turks*.

² Comical. *Comic*.

³ Tourneys. *Tournaments*.

⁴ Not but the mode of that romantic age,
The age of *tourneys*, triumphs, and quaint masques,
Glared with fantastic pageantry which dimmed
The sober eye of truth, and dazzled e'en
The sage himself.—*Mason*.

⁵ Glory. *Splendour; magnificence*. 'Solomon, in all his *glory*, was not arrayed like one of these.'—*Matthew*.

⁵ Bravery. *Finery*. 'In that day the Lord will take away the *bravery* of their tinkling ornaments about their feet.'—*Isaiah* iii. 18.

'A stately ship, with all her *bravery* on,
And tackle trim.'—*Milton*.

make a display of wealth and magnificence. This may be accounted, in *such a great philosopher*, something *frivolous*. It is worth remarking that the term ‘frivolous’ is always applied (by those who use language with care and correctness) to a great interest shown about things that are little *to* the person in question. For, little and great,—trifling or important,—are relative terms. If a grown man or woman were to be occupied with a doll, this would be called excessively frivolous ; but no one calls a little girl frivolous for playing with a doll.

ESSAY XXXVIII. OF NATURE IN MEN.

NATURE is often hidden, sometimes overcome, seldom extinguished. Force maketh nature more violent in the return; doctrine and discourse maketh nature less importune;¹ but custom only doth alter and subdue nature. He that seeketh victory over his nature, let him not set himself too great nor too small tasks; for the first will make him dejected by often failing, and the second will make him a small proceeder, though by often prevailing. And, at the first, let him practise with helps, as swimmers do with bladders or rushes; but, after a time, let him practise with disadvantages, as dancers do with thick shoes; for it breeds great perfection if the practice be harder than the use. Where nature is mighty, and therefore the victory hard, the degrees had need be, first to stay and arrest nature in time; (like to him that would say over the four-and-twenty letters when he was angry); then to go less in quantity; as if one should, in forbearing wine, come from drinking healths to a draught at a meal; and, lastly, to discontinue altogether; but if a man have the fortitude and resolution to enfranchise himself at once, that is the best:—

‘Optimus ille animi vindex, lædencia pectus
Vincula qui rupit, dedoluitque semel.’²

Neither is the ancient rule amiss, to bend nature as a wand, to a contrary extreme, whereby to set it right; understanding it where the contrary extreme is no vice. Let not a man force a habit upon himself with a perpetual continuance, but with some intermission, for both the pause reinforceth the new onset; and if a man that is not perfect be ever in practice, he shall as well practise his errors as his abilities, and induce one habit of both; and there is no means to help this but by seasonable intermission. But let not a man trust his victory over his nature too far, for nature will lie buried a great time, and yet revive upon the occasion or temptation; like as it was with Æsop’s

¹ Importune. *Importunate; troublesome.* See page 104.

² ‘He is the best assertor of the soul, who bursts the bonds that gall his breast, and suffers all, at once.’—Ovid, *R. Amor.* 293.

damsel, turned from a cat to a woman, who sat very demurely at the board's end till a mouse ran before her; therefore, let a man either avoid the occasion altogether, or put himself often to it, that he may be little moved with it.

A man's nature is best perceived in privateness,¹ for there is no affectation in passion; for that putteth a man out of his precepts: and in a new case or experiment, for there custom leaveth him. They are happy men whose natures sort² with their vocations;³ otherwise they may say, '*Multum incola fuit anima mea,*'⁴ when they converse⁵ in those things they do not affect.⁶ In studies, whatsoever a man commandeth upon himself, let him set hours for it; but whatsoever is agreeable to his nature, let him take no care for any set times; for his thoughts will fly to it of themselves, so as the spaces of other business or studies will suffice. A man's nature runs either to herbs or weeds; therefore let him seasonably water the one, and destroy the other.

ANTITHETA ON NATURE IN MEN.

PRO.

'*Consuetudo contra naturam, quasi tyrannis quædam est; et cito, ac levi occasione corrui.*

'*Custom, when contrary to nature, is a kind of usurpation over it; and is quickly overthrown on the most trifling occasion.*'

CONTRA.

'*Cogitamus secundum naturam; loquimur secundum præcepta; sed agimus secundum consuetudinem.*

'*We think according to our nature; we speak according to instruction; but we act according to custom.*'

¹ Privateness. *Privacy.* See page 115.

² Sort. *Suit.* See page 81.

³ Vocation. *Calling in life.* See page 23.

⁴ 'My soul has been long a sojourner.'

⁵ Converse. *To have one's way of life in.* See '*Conversation,*' page 299. '*Let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ.*' *Phil. i. 27.*

'*Octavia is of a holy and still conversation.*'—*Shakespeare.*

⁶ Affect. *To like.*

'*Dost thou affect her?*'—*Shakespeare.*

ANNOTATIONS.

‘Neither is the ancient rule amiss, to bend Nature as a wand, to the contrary extreme, whereby to set it right.’

This ‘ancient rule’¹ needs to be qualified by a caution against ‘bending the wand’ *too far*: an error sometimes committed by well-intentioned persons. If A. confesses, and with truth, that he is conscious of a natural tendency towards parsimony, and B. that his natural leaning is towards careless prodigality, it is yet possible we may find, in practice,—greatly to the astonishment of some—that A. errs, when he does err, generally on the side of profusion, and B. on that of parsimony; each having guarded exclusively against a danger on one side, and thinking that he cannot go too far the other way. So, also, one who is excessively in dread of over-deference for some highly-esteemed and venerated friend, may, perhaps, in practice, ‘bend the wand’ too far the other way. His veneration will then be *theoretical* and *general*; while, *practically*, and in almost every *particular instance*, he will be cherishing, as a matter of duty, a strong prejudice against every proposal, decision, measure, institution, person, or thing, that his friend approves.

I have noticed in the ‘Annotations’ on Essay VI. a like error, in carrying to a faulty excess the endeavour to repress all ill feelings towards one who has injured one’s self: the error, namely, of breaking down, in his favour, the boundaries of right and wrong, and treating a man as blameless or laudable, because it is to *us* he has done a wrong.

‘A man’s nature is best perceived in privateness; in passion: and in a new case or experiment.’

To this excellent list of things that show nature, Bacon might have added, in *small* things rather than great. ‘A straw best shows how the wind blows.’ The most ordinary and unimportant actions of a man’s life will often show more of his natural character and his habits, than more important actions

¹ Aristotle’s: see *Eth. Nicom.* b. ii.

which are done *deliberately*, and sometimes *against* his natural inclinations.

On this is founded the art which many persons (the majority of them probably empty pretenders) now practise, called by some '*Graptomancy*'—the judging of character from hand-writing. Amidst much delusion and quackery, it is certain that some persons do possess a gift by which they have made some wonderful hits. And to those who deride the whole matter as absurd, it may easily be proved not only that there is something in it, but that they themselves think so. For, all are accustomed to speak of a '*man's hand*' and a '*woman's*:' and it is plain the difference must depend on something mental; since there is no call for muscular strength. Almost all, again, speak of a '*genteel*' and a '*vulgar*' hand-writing. There is, however (as was justly remarked by the late Bishop Copleston), no greater indication of character in a man's way of *writing*, than in his way of walking, or of wiping his face, &c. But the difference is, that, in all the other ordinary actions, the observation of manner is only *momentary*; whereas, in *writing*, there is a permanent *record* of it, which may be examined at leisure.

'A man's nature runs either to herbs or weeds: therefore let him seasonably water the one and destroy the other.'

There are some considerations with regard to human nature, unnoticed by Bacon, which are very important, as involving the absolute necessity of great watchfulness, candour, and diligence, in those who would, indeed, desire to '*destroy the weeds.*' Human nature (as I have observed in a former work) is always and everywhere, in the most important points, substantially the same; circumstantially and externally, men's manners and conduct are infinitely various in various times and regions. If the former were not true,—if it were not for this fundamental agreement,—history could furnish no instruction; if the latter were not true,—if there were not these apparent and circumstantial differences,—hardly any one could fail to profit by that instruction. For, few are so dull as not to learn something from the records of past experience in cases precisely similar to their own. But as it is, much candour and diligence are called

for in tracing the analogy between cases which, at the first glance, seem very different—in observing the workings of the same human nature under all its various disguises,—in recognizing, as it were, the same plant in different stages of its growth, and in all the varieties resulting from climate and culture, soil and season. For, so far as any fault or folly is peculiar to any *particular age* or *country*, its effects may be expected to pass away soon, without spreading very widely; but so far as it belongs to *human nature* in general, we must expect to find the evil effects of it reappearing, again and again, in various forms, in all ages, and in various regions. Plants brought from a foreign land, and cultivated by human care, may often be, by human care, extirpated, or may even perish for *want* of care; but the indigenous product of the soil, even when seemingly eradicated, will again and again be found springing up afresh:

‘Sponte suâ quæ se tollunt in luminis oras
Infecunda quidem, sed læta et fortia surgunt,
Quippe solo natura subest.’

If we would be really safe from the danger of committing faults of a like character with those which we regard with abhorrence in men removed from us either by time or place, we must seek that safety in a vigilant suspicion of the human heart. We can be secured from the recurrence of similar faults in some different shapes, only by the sedulous cultivation of that christian spirit, whose implantation is able to purify, to renovate, to convert that nature—in short, to ‘CREATE THE NEW MAN.’ Christian principle only can overthrow the ‘idols of the race’ (*idola tribus*), as Bacon elsewhere calls them;—the errors springing out of man’s nature.¹

¹ See *Essays*, 3rd series.

ESSAY XXXIX. OF CUSTOM AND EDUCATION.

MEN'S thoughts are much according to their inclination ; their discourse and speeches according to their learning and infused opinions ; but their deeds are after¹ as² they have been accustomed : and, therefore, as Machiavel well noteth (though in an evil-favoured instance), there is no trusting to the force of nature, nor to the bravery of words, except it be corroborate³ by custom. His instance is, that for the achieving of a desperate conspiracy, a man should not rest upon the fierceness of any man's nature, or his resolute undertakings, but take such a one as hath had his hands formerly in blood : but Machiavel knew not of a friar Clement, nor a Ravillac, nor a Jaureguy, nor a Baltazar Gerard ; yet his rule holdeth still, that nature, nor the engagement of words, are not⁴ so forcible as custom. Only, superstition is now so well advanced, that men of the first blood are as firm as butchers by occupation ; and votary⁵ resolution is made equipollent to custom, even in matter of blood. In other things, the predominancy of custom is everywhere visible, insomuch as a man would wonder to hear men profess, protest, engage, give great words, and then do just as they have done before, as if they were dead images and engines, moved only by the wheels of custom. We see also the reign or tyranny of custom, what it is. The Indians (I mean the sect of their wise men) lay themselves quietly upon a stack of wood, and so sacrifice themselves by fire : nay, the wives

¹ After. *According to*. 'That ye seek not *after* your own heart.'—*Num.* xv. 39. 'He who was of the bondwoman was born *after* the flesh.'—*Gal.* iv. 23. 'Deal not with us *after* our sins.'—*Litany*.

² As. *That*. See page 26.

³ Corroborate. *Corroborated ; strengthened ; made firm.*

'His heart is *corroborate*.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁴ Nor—are not. This double negative is used frequently by old writers.

'Nor to no Roman else.'—*Shakespeare*.

'Another sort there be, that will

Be talking of the fairies still,

Nor never can they have their fill.'—*Drayton*.

⁵ Votary. *Consecrated by a vow*.

strive to be burned with the corpse of their husbands. The lads of Sparta,¹ of ancient time, were wont to be scourged upon the altar of Diana, without so much as queching.² I remember, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's time of England, an Irish rebel condemned, put up a petition to the deputy that he might be hanged in a withe,³ and not in a halter, because it had been so used with former rebels. There be monks in Russia, for penance, that will sit a whole night in a vessel of water, till they be engaged with hard ice.

Many examples may be put of the force of custom, both upon mind and body : therefore, since custom is the principal magistrate of man's life, let men by all means endeavour to obtain good customs. Certainly, custom is most perfect when it beginneth in young years : this we call education ; which is, in effect, but an early custom. So we see in languages, the tone is more pliant to all expressions and sounds, the joints are more supple to all feats of activity and motions, in youth than afterwards ; for it is true, the late learners cannot so well take up the ply, except it be in some minds, that have not suffered themselves to fix, but have kept themselves open and prepared to receive continual amendment, which is exceeding rare : but if the force of custom, simple and separate, be great, the force of custom, copulate and conjoined, and collegiate, is far greater ; for there example teacheth, company comforteth,⁴ emulation quickeneth, glory raiseth ; so as in such places the force of custom is in his⁵ exaltation. Certainly, the great multiplication⁶ of virtues upon human nature resteth upon societies well ordained and dis-

¹ Cic. *Tuscul. Dial.* ii. 14.

² Quech (properly quich). *To move ; to stir.*

' Underre her feet, there as she sate,
An huge great lyon laye, that mote appalle
An hardy courage ; like captived thrall
With a strong iron chain and collar bounde—
Not once he could nor move nor quick.'—*Spenser.*

³ Withs. *Twigs, or bands of twigs.* ' If they bind me with seven green *withs*, then shall I be weak.'—*Judges* xvi. 7.

⁴ Comfort. *To strengthen as an auxiliary ; to help.* (The meaning of the original Latin word, *Conforto.*) ' Now we exhort you brethren, *comfort* the feeble-minded.'—*I Thess.* v. 14.

⁵ His. *Its.* ' But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed *his* own body.'—*1 Cor.* xv. 38.

⁶ Multiplication upon. ' Increase and *multiply* upon us thy mercy.'—*Collect for the 4th Sunday after Trinity.*

ciplined ; for commonwealths and good governments do nourish virtue grown, but do not much mend the seeds : but the misery is, that the most effectual means are now applied to the ends least to be desired.

ANNOTATIONS.

‘ Men’s thoughts are much according to their inclination : their discourse and speeches according to their learning and infused opinions ; but their deeds are after as they have been accustomed.’

This remark, like many others, Bacon has condensed in Latin into the very brief and pithy apophthegm which I have given in the ‘ Antitheta on Nature in Men.’ ‘ Cogitamus secundum naturam ; loquimur secundum præcepta ; sed agimus secundum consuetudinem.’ Of course, Bacon did not mean his words to be taken literally in their utmost extent, and without any exception or modification ; as if natural disposition and instruction had nothing to do with conduct. And, of course, he could not mean anything so self-contradictory as to say that *all* action is the result of custom : for it is plain that, in the first instance, it must be *by* actions that a custom is formed.

But he uses a strong expression, in order to impress it on our mind that, for practice, custom is the most essential thing, and that it will often overbear both the original disposition, and the precepts which have been learnt : that whatever a man may inwardly think, and (with perfect sincerity) say, you cannot fully depend on his conduct till you know how he has been *accustomed* to act. For, continued action is like a continued stream of water, which *wears* for itself a *channel* that it will not easily be turned from. The bed which the current had gradually scooped at first, afterwards confines it.

Bacon is far from meaning, I conceive, when he says that ‘ men speak as they have learned’—to limit himself to the case of *insincere* professions ; but to point out how much easier it is to learn to repeat a lesson correctly, than to bring it into practice, when custom is opposed to it.

This is the doctrine of one whom Bacon did not certainly regard with any undue veneration—Aristotle; who, in his *Ethics*, dwells earnestly on the importance of being early accustomed to right practice, with a view to the formation of virtuous habits. And he derives the word ‘ethics’ from a Greek word signifying custom; even as the word ‘morality’ is derived from the corresponding Latin word ‘mos.’

It is to be observed that, at the present day, it is common to use the words ‘custom’ and ‘habit’ as synonymous, and often to employ the latter where Bacon would have used the former. But, strictly speaking, they denote respectively the *cause* and the effect. Repeated acts constitute the ‘custom;’ and the ‘habit’ is the condition of mind or body thence resulting. For instance, a man who has been *accustomed* to rise at a certain hour, will have acquired the *habit* of waking and being ready to rise as soon as that hour arrives. And one who has made it his *custom* to drink drams will have fallen into the *habit* of craving for that stimulus, and of yielding to that craving; and so of the rest.

Those are, then, in error who disparage (as Mrs. Hannah More does) all practice that does not spring from a formed habit. For instance, they censure those who employ children as almoners, handing them money or other things to relieve the poor with. For, say they, no one can *give* what is not his own: there is no charity unless you part with something that you might have kept, and which it is a self-denial to part with. The answer is, that if the child does this readily and gladly, he has *already learnt* the virtue of charity; but if it is a *painful* self-denial which you urge him to, as a duty, you are creating an association of charity with pain. On the contrary, if you accustom him to the pleasure of seeing distress relieved, and of being the instrument of giving pleasure, and doing good, the desire of this gratification will lead him, afterwards, to part with something of his own rather than forego it. Thus it is—to use Horace’s comparison—that the young hound is trained for the chase in the woods, from the time that he barks at the deer-skin in the hall.¹

¹ ‘Venaticus, ex quo
Tempore cervinam pellem latravit in aula,
Militat in silvis catulus.’—*Horace*, Book i. ep. 2, l. 65.

The precept is very good, to begin with swimming with corks.

There is an error somewhat akin to the one I have been combating, which may be worth noticing here. Declamations are current in the present day against the iniquity of giving a bias to the minds of young persons, by teaching them our own interpretation of the Sacred Volume, instead of leaving them to investigate for themselves; that is, against endeavouring to place them in the same situation with those to whom those very Scriptures were written; instead of leaving them to struggle with difficulties which the Scriptures nowhere contemplate or provide against. The maintainers of such a principle would do well to consider, whether it would not, if consistently pursued, prove too much. Do you not, it might be asked, bias the minds of children by putting into their hands the Scriptures themselves, as the infallible word of God? If you are convinced that they are so, you must be sure that they will stand the test of unprejudiced inquiry. Are you not, at least, bound in fairness to teach them, at the same time, the systems of ancient Mythology, the doctrines of the Koran, and those of modern philosophers, that they may freely chuse amongst all? Let any one who is disposed to deride the absurdity of such a proposal, consider whether there is any objection to it, which would not equally lie against the exclusion of systematic religious instruction, or indeed systematic training in any science or art.

It is urged, however, that since a man must *wish* to find the system true in which he has been *trained*, his judgment must be unduly biassed by that wish. It would follow from this principle, that no physician should be trusted who is not utterly indifferent whether his patient recovers or dies, and who is not wholly free from any favourable hope from the mode of treatment pursued; since else his mind must be unfairly influenced by his wishes!

'The predominancy of custom is everywhere visible; insomuch as a man would wonder to hear men profess, protest, engage, give great words, and then do just as they have done before; as if they were dead images and engines, moved only by the wheels of custom.'

This 'predominancy of custom' is remarkably exemplified in the case of soldiers who have long been habituated to obey, as if by a mechanical impulse, the word of command.

It happened, in the case of a contemplated insurrection, in a certain part of the British Empire, that the plotters of it sought to tamper with the soldiers who were likely to be called out against them; and, for this purpose, frequented the public-houses to which the soldiers resorted, and drew them into conversation. Reports of these attempts reached the officers; who, however, found that so little impression was made, that they did not think it needful to take any notice of them. On one occasion it appeared that a sergeant of a Scotch regiment was so far talked over as to feel and express great sympathy with the agitators, on account of their alleged grievances, as laid before him by the seducer. 'Weel, now, I did na ken that; indeed that seems unco hard; I can na wonder that ye should complain o' that,' &c., &c.

The other, seeking to follow up his blow, then said—'I suppose now such honest fellows as you, if you were to be called out against us, when we were driven to rise in a good cause, would never have the heart to *fire* on poor fellows who were only seeking liberty and justice.' The sergeant replied (just as he was reaching down his cap and belt, to return to barracks), '*I'd just na advise ye to try!*'

He felt conscious—misled as he had been respecting the justice of the cause,—that, whatever might be his private opinions and inward feelings, if the word of command were given to 'make ready, present, fire,' he should instinctively obey it.

And this is very much the case with any one who has been long drilled in the ranks of a *party*. Whatever may be his natural disposition—whatever may be the judgment his unbiassed understanding dictates on any point—whatever he may inwardly feel, and may (with perfect sincerity) have said,¹ it is most likely that, when you come to action, the habit of going along with his party will prevail. And the more *general and indefinite* the purpose for which the party, or society (or by whatever name it may be called) is framed, and the less *distinctly specified* are its objects, the more will its members be, usually, under the control and direction of its leaders.²

He who joins some Association formed for a distinctly *defined*

¹ *Thoughts on the Evangelical Alliance.*

² See the 'Annotations' on the Essay on 'Unity in Religion,' and on 'Factions.'

object, and under *fixed* rules, is like one who engages in a commercial speculation on the system of what is called '*limited liability*;' where a man stakes nothing beyond what was expressly stipulated. But he who joins a Party, resembles one who enters into an ordinary Trade-partnership, and who becomes responsible for all the proceedings, and all the debts, of the Firm.

I was once conversing with an intelligent and liberal-minded man, who was expressing his strong disapprobation of some late decisions and proceedings of the leading persons of the Body he belonged to, and assuring me that the greater part of the subordinates regarded them as wrong and unjustifiable. 'But,' said I, 'they will nevertheless, I suppose, *comply*, and act as they are required?' 'Oh, yes, they *must* do that!'

Of course, there are many various *degrees* of partisanship, as there are also different degrees of custom in all other things: and it is not meant that all who are in any degree connected with any party, must be equally devoted adherents of it. But I am speaking of the tendency of party-spirit, and describing a party-man *so far forth* as he is such. And persons of much experience in human affairs lay it down accordingly as a maxim, that you should be very cautious how you fully *trust* a party-man, however sound his own judgment, and however pure the principles on which he acts, when left to himself. A sensible and upright man, who keeps himself quite unconnected with party, may be *calculated* on as likely to *act* on the views which you have found him to take on each point. In some things, perhaps, you find him to differ from you; in others, to agree; but when you have learnt what his sentiments are, you know in each case what to *expect*. But it is not so with one who is connected with, and consequently controlled by, a party. In proportion as he is so, he is not fully his own master; and in some instances you will probably find him take you quite by surprise, by assenting to some course quite at variance with the sentiments which you have heard him express—probably with perfect sincerity—as his own. When it comes to action, a formed habit of following the party will be likely to prevail over everything. At least, '*I'd just na advise ye to try!*'

It is important to keep in mind that—as is evident from what has been said just above—habits are formed, not at one stroke, but gradually and insensibly; so that unless vigilant

care be employed, a great change may come over the character without our being conscious of any. For, as Dr. Johnson has well expressed it, 'The diminutive chains of habit are seldom heavy enough to be felt, till they are too strong to be broken.'

And this is often strongly exemplified in the case just adverted to—that of party-spirit. It is not often that a man, all at once, resolves to join himself to a party; but he is drawn in by little and little. Party is like one of those perilous whirlpools sometimes met with at sea. When a vessel reaches the outer edge of one of them, the current moves so slowly, and with so little of a curve, that the mariners may be unconscious of moving in any curve at all, or even of any motion whatever. But each circuit of the spiral increases the velocity, and gradually increases the curvature, and brings the vessel nearer to the centre. And perhaps this rapid motion, and the direction of it, are for the first time perceived, when the force of the current has become irresistible.

Some, no doubt, there were, of those who originally joined the Association called 'United Irishmen,' who, entertaining no evil designs, were seduced by specious appearances and fair professions, and did not enough consider that when once embarked on the stream of Party, no one can be sure how far he may ultimately be carried. They found themselves, doubtless most unexpectedly to many of them, engaged in an attempted revolution, and partners of men in actual rebellion.

No doubt many did draw back, though not without difficulty, and danger, and shame, when they perceived whither they were being hurried; though it is also, I think, highly probable that many were prevented by that difficulty and shame from stopping short and turning back in time; and having 'stepped in so far,' persevered in a course which, if it had been originally proposed to them, they would have shrunk from with horror, saying, 'Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?'

'It is true that a man *may*, if he will, withdraw from, and disown, a party which he had formerly belonged to. But this is a step which requires no small degree of moral courage. And not only are we strongly tempted to shrink from taking such a step, but also our dread of doing so is likely rather to mislead our reason than to overpower it. A man will *wish* to

think it justifiable to adhere to the party; and this wish is likely to bias his judgment, rather than to prevail on him to act contrary to his judgment. For, we know how much the judgment of men is likely to be *biased*, as well as how much they are tempted to acquiesce in something *against* their judgment, when earnestly pressed by the majority of those who are acting with them,—whom they look up to,—whose approbation encourages them,—and whose censure they cannot but dread.

‘Some doctrine, suppose, is promulgated, or measure proposed, or mode of procedure commenced, which some members of a party do not, in their unbiassed judgment, approve. But any one of them is disposed, first to *wish*, then to *hope*, and lastly to *believe*, that those are in the right whom he would be sorry to think wrong. And again, in any case where his judgment may still be unchanged, he may feel that it is but a *small* concession he is called on to make, and that there are *great* benefits to set against it; and that, after all, he is perhaps called on merely to *acquiesce silently* in what he does not quite approve; and, he is loth to incur censure, as lukewarm in the good cause,—as presumptuous,—as unfriendly towards those who are acting with him. To be ‘a breaker up of the Club’ (ἑταιρίας διαλυτης) was a reproach, the dread of which, we learn from the great historian of Greece, carried much weight with it in the transactions of the party-warfare he is describing. And we may expect the like in all similar cases.

‘One may sometimes hear a person say in so many words—though far oftener, in his conduct—‘It is true I do not altogether approve of such and such a step; but it is insisted on as essential by those who are acting with us; and if we were to hold out against it, we should lose their co-operation; which would be a most serious evil. There is nothing to be done, therefore, but to comply.’’

‘*Certainly custom is most perfect when it beginneth in young years: this we call education; which is, in effect, but an early custom.*’

Education may be compared to the grafting of a tree. Every gardener knows that the *younger* the wilding-stock is that is to be grafted, the easier and the more effectual is the operation,

because, then, one scion put on just above the root, will become the main stem of the tree, and all the branches it puts forth will be of the right sort. When, on the other hand, a tree is to be grafted at a considerable age (which may be very successfully done), you have to put on twenty or thirty grafts on the several branches; and afterwards you will have to be watching from time to time for the wilding-shoots which the stock will be putting forth, and pruning them off. And even so, one whose character is to be *reformed* at mature age, will find it necessary not merely to implant a right principle once for all, but also to bestow a distinct attention on the correction of this, that, and the other, bad habit.

It is wonderful that so many persons should confound together being accustomed to certain *objects*, and accustomed to a certain mode of *acting*. Aristotle, on the contrary, justly remarks that opposite habits are formed by means of the same things (*ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν, καὶ διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν*) treated in opposite ways; as, for instance, humanity and inhumanity—by being accustomed to the view of suffering, with and without the effort to relieve it. Of two persons who have been accustomed to the sight of much human misery, one, who has been used to pass it by without any effort to relieve it, will become careless and hardened to such spectacles; while another, who has been in the practice of *relieving* sufferers, will acquire a strong habit of endeavouring to afford relief. These two persons will both have been accustomed to the same *objects*, but will have acquired opposite *habits*, from being accustomed to *act* in opposite ways.

‘Suppose that there is in your neighbourhood a loud bell that is rung very early every morning to call the labourers in some great manufactory. At first, and for some time, your rest will be broken by it; but if you accustom yourself to lie still, and try to compose yourself, you will become in a few days so *used to it*, that it will not even wake you. But any one who makes a point of rising immediately at the call, will become so *used to it* in the *opposite* way, that the sound will never fail to rouse him from the deepest sleep. Both will have been accustomed to the same bell, but will have formed opposite habits from their contrary modes of action.

‘And we may see the same thing even in the training of brute animals. For instance, of sporting dogs, there are some, such as the greyhound, that are trained to *pursue* hares; and others, which are trained to *stand* motionless when they come upon a hare, even though they see it running before them. Now, both kinds are accustomed to hares; and both have originally the same instincts; for all dogs have an instinctive tendency to pursue game. But the one kind of dog has always been encouraged to run after a hare, and the other has always been chastised if it attempts to do so, and has been trained to stand still.’¹

But it must not be forgotten that education resembles the grafting of a tree in this point also, that there must be some affinity between the stock and the graft, though a very important practical difference may exist; for example, between a worthless crab, and a fine apple. Even so, the new nature, as it may be called, superinduced by education, must always retain some relation to the original one, though differing in most important points. You cannot, by any kind of artificial training, make *any* thing of *any* one, and obliterate all trace of the natural character. Those who hold that this *is* possible, and attempt to effect it, resemble Virgil, who (whether in ignorance or, as some think, by way of ‘poetical licence’) talks of grafting an oak on an elm: ‘glandesque sues fregere sub ulmis.’

One of Doctor Johnson’s paradoxes, more popular in his time than now, but far from being now exploded, was, that a given amount of ability may be turned in any direction, ‘even as a man may walk this way or that.’ And so he can; because walking is the action for which the legs are fitted; but though he may use his eyes for looking at this object or that, he cannot hear with his eyes, or see with his ears. And the eyes and ears are not more different than, for instance, the poetical faculty, and the mathematical. ‘Oh, but if Milton had turned his *mind* to mathematics, and if Newton had turned his mind to poetry, the former might have been the great mathematician, and the latter the great poet.’ This is open to the proverbial reply, ‘If my aunt had been a man, she would have been my uncle.’ For, the supposition implied in these *ifs* is, that Milton and

¹ *Lessons on Morals.*

Newton should have been quite different characters from what they were.

‘ . . . Minds that have not suffered themselves to fix, but have kept themselves open and prepared to receive continual amendment ; which is exceeding rare.’

And as admirable as it is rare. Such minds may indeed *print* their opinions, but do not *stereotype* them. Nor does the self-distrust, the perpetual care, the diligent watchfulness, the openness to conviction, the exercise of which is implied in Bacon’s description, necessarily involve a state of painful and unceasing doubt. For, in proportion as a man is watchfully and prayerfully on his guard against the unseen current of passions and prejudices, which is ever tending to drive him out of the right course, in the same degree he will have reason for cherishing an humble hope that He, the Spirit of Truth, is, and will be, with him, to enlighten his understanding, to guide his conduct, and to lead him onwards to that state in which Faith shall be succeeded by sight, and hope by enjoyment.

‘ The force of custom, copulate and conjoined, and collegiate, is far greater.’

For this reason it is, that what is said or done by very inferior persons, is the best sign of what is *commonly* said or done in the place and time in which they live. A man of resolute character, and of an original turn of thought, being more likely to resist this force of ‘copulate and collegiate’ custom, does not furnish so good a sign of what are the *prevailing* opinions and customs. Hence the proverb :

‘ A straw best shows
How the wind blows.’

A bar of heavy metal would not be perceptibly influenced by the wind.

I wish I could feel justified in concluding this head without saying anything of Bacon’s own character ;—without holding him up as himself a lamentable example of practice at variance with good sentiments, and sound judgment, and right precepts. He thought well, and he spoke well ; but he had *accustomed*

himself to act very far from well. And justice requires that he should be held up as a warning beacon to teach all men an important lesson; to afford them a sad proof that no intellectual power—no extent of learning,—not even the most pure and exalted moral sentiments, confined to theory, will supply the want of a diligent and watchful conformity in practice to christian principle. All the attempts that have been made to vindicate or palliate Bacon's moral conduct, tend only to lower, and to lower very much, the standard of virtue. He appears but too plainly to have been worldly, ambitious, covetous, base, selfish, and unscrupulous.¹ And it is remarkable that the Mammon which he served proved but a faithless master in the end. He reached the highest pinnacle, indeed, to which his ambition had aimed; but he died impoverished, degraded, despised, and broken-hearted. His example, therefore, is far from being at all seductive.

To Bacon, and unhappily to many others also, will apply the satirical lines of the poet :²

‘ Our better thoughts
Are as our Sunday garments, then put on
When we have nought to *do*; in working days
We wear a worse, for thrift.’

But let no one, thereupon, undervalue or neglect the lessons of wisdom which his writings may supply, and which we may, through divine grace, turn to better account than he did himself. It would be absurd to infer, that because Bacon was a great philosopher, and far from a good man, therefore you will be the better man for keeping clear of his philosophy. His intellectual superiority was no more the cause of his moral

¹ This censure of Bacon has actually been complained of as undeserved; not on the ground that his *conduct* was any better than it is but too well known to have been, but on the ground that his *writings* contain excellent views of Gospel-truth!

This is exactly the doctrine of the ancient Gnostics; who held that their (so-called) *knowledge* [Gnosis] of the Gospel would save them, though leading a vicious life.

But when instances of such teaching in our own days are adduced (as unhappily may be done to a great extent), some persons—including some who are themselves of blameless life—resolutely shut their ears to evidence, and will not be brought to perceive, or at least to acknowledge, that any such thing as Gnosticism exists among us, or that we are in any danger of antinomian doctrine.

So strong is the force of Party!

² Crowe; formerly Public Orator at Oxford.

failures, than Solomon's wisdom was of his. You may be as faulty a character as either of them was, without possessing a particle of their wisdom, and without seeking to gain instruction from it. The intellectual light which they enjoyed did not, indeed, keep them in the right path; but you will not be the more likely to walk in it, if you quench any light that is afforded you.

The Canaanites of old, we should remember, dwelt in 'a good land, flowing with milk and honey,' though they worshipped not the true God, but served abominable demons, with sacrifices of the produce of their soil, and even with the blood of their children. But the Israelites were invited to go in, and take possession of 'well-stored houses that they builded not, and wells which they digged not;' and they 'took the labours of the people in possession;' only, they were warned to beware lest, in their prosperity and wealth, they should 'forget the Lord their God,' and to offer to Him the first fruits of their land.

Neglect not, then, any of the advantages of intellectual cultivation which God's providence has placed within your reach; nor 'think scorn of that pleasant land,' and prefer wandering by choice in the barren wilderness of ignorance; but let the intellect which God has endowed you with be cultivated as a servant to *Him*; and then it will be, not a master, but a useful servant, to *you*.

ESSAY XL. OF FORTUNE.

IT cannot be denied but outward accidents conduce much to fortune; favour, opportunity, death of others, occasion fitting virtue: but chiefly the mould of a man's fortune is in his own hands. 'Faber quisque fortunæ suæ,' saith the poet:¹ and the most frequent of external causes is, that the folly of one man is the fortune of another; for no man prospers so suddenly as by others' errors; 'serpens nisi serpentem comederit non fit draco.'² Overt and apparent³ virtues bring forth praise; but there be secret and hidden virtues that bring forth fortune; certain deliveries of a man's self, which have no name. The Spanish name, 'disemboltura,'⁴ partly expresseth them, when there be not stonds⁵ and restiveness in a man's nature, but that the wheels of his mind keep way⁶ with the wheels of his fortune; for so Livy (after he had described Cato Major in these words, 'in illo viro, tantum robur corporis et animi fuit, ut quocunque loco natus esset, fortunam sibi facturum videretur')⁷ falleth upon that he had, 'versatile ingenium.'⁸ Therefore, if a man look sharply and attentively, he shall see fortune; for though she be blind, yet she is not invisible. The way of fortune is like the milken⁹ way in the sky; which is a meeting, or knot, of a

¹ 'Every man the artificer of his own fortune.'—*Appius Claudius*; but attributed by Bacon elsewhere (*Advancement of Learning*) to Plautus.

² 'Unless the serpent devours the serpent, it does not become a dragon.'

³ Apparent. *Evident; known; visible.*

'As well the fear of harm, as harm apparent,

In my mind ought to be prevented.'—*Shakespeare.*

'The outward and apparent sanctity should flow from purity of heart.'—*Atterbury.*

⁴ Desenvoltura. *Graceful ease.*

⁵ Stonds. *Stops.* 'The removal of the stonds and impediments of the mind, that often clears the passage and current to a man's fortune.'—Bacon's *Letter to Sir Henry Temple.*

⁶ Way. *Time.* The time in which a certain space can be passed through or over.

'A mile-way.'—*Chaucer.*

⁷ 'In that man there was so much strength of body and of mind, that it seems that in whatever place he had been, he would have made fortune his own.'

⁸ 'A versatile mind.'

⁹ Milken. *Milky.* 'The remedies are to be proposed from a constant course of the milken diet.'—*Temple.*

number of small stars not seen asunder, but giving light together: so are there a number of little and scarce discerned virtues, or rather faculties and customs, that make men fortunate: the Italians note some of them, such as a man would little think. When they speak of one that cannot do amiss, they will throw in into his other conditions, that he hath *Poco di matto*;¹ and, certainly, there be not two more fortunate properties than to have a little of the fool, and not too much of the honest: therefore extreme lovers of their country, or masters, were never fortunate; neither can they be; for when a man placeth his thoughts without himself, he goeth not his own way. A hasty fortune maketh an enterpriser² and remover³ (the French hath it better, 'entreprenant,' or 'remuant'), but the exercised⁴ fortune maketh the able man. Fortune is to be honoured and respected, and⁵ it be but for her daughters, Conscience and Reputation; for those two felicity breedeth; the first within a man's self, the latter in others towards him. All wise men, to decline⁶ the envy of their own virtues, use to ascribe them to Providence and Fortune; for so they may the better assume them: and besides, it is greatness in a man to be the care of the higher powers. So Cæsar said to the pilot in the tempest, '*Cæsarem portas, et fortunam ejus.*'⁷ So Sylla chose the name of 'felix,' and not of 'magnus':⁸ and it hath been noted, that those who ascribe openly too much to their own wisdom and policy, end unfortunate. It is written, that Timotheus the Athenian, after he had, in the account he gave to the State of his government, often interlaced this speech, 'And in this fortune had no part,' never prospered in anything

¹ 'A little of the fool.'

² Enterpriser. *An adventurer; a bold projector.*

'Wit makes an *enterpriser*, sense a man.'—*Young.*

³ Remover. *Agitator.*

⁴ Exercised. *Made familiar by use.* 'A heart exercised with covetous practices.'—*2 Pet. ii. 14.*

⁵ And. *If.*

'Nay, and I suffer this, I may go craze.'—*Beaumont and Fletcher.*

⁶ Decline. *To avoid.*

'Since the Muses do invoke my power,
I shall no more decline the sacred bower
Where Gloriana, the great mistress, lies.'—*Sir P. Sidney.*

⁷ 'You carry Cæsar and his fortunes.'—*Plut. Vit. Cæsar. 38.*

⁸ 'Fortunate,' (and not of) '*great.*'—*Plut. Syll. 34.*

he undertook afterward. Certainly there be whose fortunes are like Homer's verses, that have a slide¹ and an easiness more than the verses of other poets; as Plutarch saith of Timoleon's² fortune, in respect of that of Agesilaus, or Epaminondas; and that this should be, no doubt it is much in a man's self.

ANTITHETA ON FORTUNE.

PRO.

'Virtutes apertæ laudes pariunt; occultæ fortunas.

'Virtues that are openly seen obtain praise; but what is called luck is the result of unperceived virtues.'

CONTRA.

'Stultitia unius, fortuna alterius.

'The folly of one is the good fortune of another.'

'Fortuna veluti galaxia; hoc est, nodus quarundam obscurarum virtutum, sine nomine.

'Fortune is like a galaxy; that is to say, a collection of certain unseen and nameless endowments.'

ANNOTATIONS.

'So are there a number of little and scarce discerned faculties or customs, that make men fortunate.'

It is common to hear the lower orders speak of *luck*, either as their mode of expressing what Bacon here calls 'small faculties and customs,' or, as attributing to fortune what is a kind of indescribable and imperceptible skill. You may hear them speak of a woman who has good luck in her butter-making or in bread-making; of a gardener who is lucky or who is unlucky in grafting, or in raising melons, &c.

'When they (the Italians) speak of one that cannot do amiss, they will throw into his other conditions, that he hath 'Poco di matto' [a little of the fool].'

This is in accordance with the proverb, 'Fortune favours fools;' and it would have been well if Bacon had said some-

¹ Slide. *Fluency*. 'Often he had used to be an actor in tragedies, where he had learned, besides a *slidingness* of language, acquaintance with my passions.'—*Sidney*.

² *Vit. Timol.* 36.

thing more of it. Fortune is said to favour fools, because they trust *all* to fortune. When a fool escapes any danger, or succeeds in any undertaking, it is said that *fortune favours* him ; while a wise man is considered to prosper by his own prudence and foresight. For instance, if a fool who does not bar his door, escapes being robbed, it is ascribed to his luck ; but the prudent man, having taken precautions, is not called fortunate. But a wise man is, in fact, more likely to meet with good fortune than a foolish one ; because he puts himself *in the way* of it. If he is sending off a ship he has a better chance of obtaining a favourable wind, because he chuses the place and season in which such winds prevail as will be favourable to him. If the fool's ship arrives safely, it is by good luck *alone* ; while both must be in some degree indebted to fortune for success.¹

One way in which fools succeed where wise men fail is, that, through ignorance of the danger, they sometimes go *coolly* about some hazardous business. Hence the proverb that 'The fairies take care of children, drunken men, and idiots.'

A surgeon was once called in to bleed an apoplectic patient. He called the physician aside, and explained to him that in this particular subject the artery lay so unusually *over* the vein, that there was imminent risk of pricking it. 'Well, but he *must* be bled at all hazards ; for he is *sure* to die without.' 'I am so nervous,' said the surgeon, 'that my hand would be unsteady. But I know of a barber hard by who is accustomed to bleed ; and as he is ignorant of anatomy, he will go to work *coolly*.' The barber was summoned, and performed the operation readily and safely. When it was over, the surgeon showed him some anatomical plates, and explained to him that he had missed the artery only by a hair's breadth. He never ventured to bleed again.

One sometimes meets with an 'ill-used man ;' a man with whom everything goes wrong ; who is always thinking how happy he should be to exchange his present wretched situation for such and such another ; and when he has obtained it, finding that he is far worse off than before, and seeking a remove ; and as soon as he has obtained that, discovering that his last

¹ See *Proverbs and Precepts for Copy-pieces.*

situation was just the thing for him, and was beginning to open to him a prospect of unbroken happiness, far beyond his present state, &c. To him a verse of Shakespere well applies :—

‘O thoughts of men accurst !

Past, and to come, seem best, things present, worst.’

One is reminded of a man travelling in the African desert, surrounded by mirage, with a (seeming) lake behind him, and another lake before him, which, when he has reached, he finds to be still the same barren and scorching sand. A friend aptly remarked, ‘This man’s happiness has no present tense.’

ESSAY XLI. OF USURY.¹

MANY have made witty invectives against usury. They say, that it is pity² the devil should have God's part, which is the tithe; that the usurer is the greatest Sabbath-breaker, because his plough goeth every Sunday; that the usurer is the drone that Virgil speaketh of:

‘Ignavum fucos pecus a præsepibus arcent;’³

that the usurer breaketh the first law that was made for mankind after the fall, which was, ‘In sudore vultus tui comedes panem tuum,’⁴ not ‘In sudore vultus alieni;’⁵ that usurers should have orange-tawny bonnets, because they do judaize; that it is against nature for money to beget money; and the like. I say this only, that usury is a ‘concessum propter duritiem cordis.’⁶ for since there must be borrowing and lending, and men are so hard of heart as⁷ they will not lend freely, usury must be permitted. Some others have made suspicious and cunning propositions of banks, discovery of men's estates, and other inventions; but few have spoken of usury usefully. It is good to set before us the incommunities⁸ and commodities⁹ of usury, that the good may be either weighed out or culled

¹ Usury. *Interest on money* (not, as now, unlawful interest). ‘Thou oughtest, therefore, to have put my money to the exchangers, and then, at my coming, I should have received mine own with *usury*.’—*Matt.* xxv. 27. ‘Our angles are like money put to *usury*; they may still thrive, though we sit still, and do nothing.’—*Isaak Walton*.

² It is pity. *It is a pity*.

‘That he is mad, ’tis true; ’tis true, ’tis pity;
And pity ’tis, ’tis true.’—*Shakespeare*.

³ ‘They drive from the hive the lazy swarm of drones.’—*Georg.* iv. 168.

⁴ ‘In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.’—*Gen.* iii. 19.

⁵ ‘In the sweat of another's face.’

⁶ ‘A concession on account of hardness of heart.’—See *Matt.* xix. 8.

⁷ As. *That*. See page 26.

⁸ Incommodity. *Inconvenience; disadvantage*. ‘The uncouth *incommodity* of my solitary life.’—*Bishop Hall*. ‘What *incommodity* have you conceived to be in the common law.’—*Spenser*.

⁹ Commodities. *Advantages*.

‘I will turn diseases to *commodity*.’—*Shakespeare*.

out ; and warily to provide, that, while we make forth to that which is better, we meet not with that which is worse.

The discommodities¹ of usury are, first, that it makes fewer merchants : for were it not for this lazy trade of usury, money would not lie still, but it would in great part be employed upon merchandising,² which is the *vena porta*³ of wealth in a State : the second, that it makes poor merchants ; for as a farmer cannot husband his ground so well if he sit at a great rent, so the merchant cannot drive his trade so well if he sit at great usury : the third is incident to the other two, and that is, the decay of customs of kings, or estates,⁴ which ebb or flow with merchandising : the fourth, that it bringeth the treasure of a realm or State into a few hands ; for the usurer being at certainties, and the other at uncertainties, at the end of the game most of the money will be in the box ; and ever a State flourisheth when wealth is more equally spread : the fifth, that it beats down the price of land ; for the employment of money is chiefly either merchandising, or purchasing ; and usury waylays both : the sixth, that it doth dull and damp all industries, improvements, and new inventions, wherein money would be stirring, if it were not for this slug : the last, that it is the canker and ruin of many men's estates, which in process of time breeds a public poverty.

On the other side, the commodities of usury are, first, that howsoever⁵ usury in some respects hindereth merchandising, yet in some other it advanceth it ; for it is certain that the greatest part of trade is driven by young merchants upon borrowing at interest ; so as⁶ if the usurer either call in or keep back his money, there will ensue presently a great stand of trade : the second is, that, were it not for this easy borrowing upon interest, men's necessities would draw upon them a most sudden undoing,⁷ in that⁸ they would be forced to sell their means (be it lands

¹ Discommodities. *Inconveniences*. See page 376.

² Merchandising. *Trading*. 'The Phenicians, of whose exceeding *merchandising* we read so much in ancient histories, were Canaanites, whose very name signifies merchants.'—*Brerewood*.

³ *The great vein*.

⁴ Estates. *States*. See page 146.

⁵ Howsoever. *Although*. See page 2.

⁶ As. *That*. See page 26.

⁷ Undoing. See page 317.

⁸ In that. *Inasmuch as*. 'Things are preached not *in that* they are taught, but *in that* they are published.'—*Hooker*.

or goods) far under foot,¹ and so, whereas usury doth but gnaw upon them, bad markets would swallow them quite up. As for mortgaging, or pawning, it will little mend the matter; for either men will not take pawns² without use,³ or if they do, they will look precisely for the forfeiture. I remember a cruel monied man in the country, that would say, 'The devil take this usury, it keeps us from forfeitures of mortgages and bonds.' The third and last is, that it is a vanity to conceive that there would be ordinary borrowing without profit, and it is impossible to conceive the number of inconveniences that will ensue, if borrowing be cramped: therefore to speak of the abolishing of usury is idle; all States have ever had it in one kind or rate or other—so as that opinion must be sent to Utopia.

To speak now of the reformation and reglement⁴ of usury, how the discommodities of it may be best avoided, and the commodities retained. It appears by the balance of commodities and discommodities of usury, two things are to be reconciled; the one that the tooth of usury be grinded, that it bite not too much; the other that there be left open a means to invite monied men to lend to the merchants, for the continuing and quickening⁵ of trade. This cannot be done, except you introduce two several sorts of usury, a less and a greater; for if you reduce usury to one low rate, it will ease the common borrower, but the merchant will be to seek for money; and it is to be noted, that the trade of merchandise being the most lucrative, may bear usury at a good rate—other contracts not so.

To serve both intentions,⁶ the way would be briefly thus:—that there be two rates of usury; the one free and general for all, the other under licence only to certain persons, and in certain places of merchandising. First, therefore, let usury in general be reduced to five in the hundred, and let that rate be proclaimed to be free and current, and let the State shut itself

¹ Under foot. *Too low*. 'What a stupidity is it, then, that we should deject ourselves to such a sluggish, and *underfoot* philosophy.'—*Milton*.

² Pawns. *Pledges*.

'Her oath for love, her honour's pawn.'—*Shakespeare*.

³ Use. *Interest*.

⁴ Reglement. *Regulation*.

⁵ Quickened. *To give life to*. 'You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.'—*Ephes. ii. 1*.

⁶ Intention. *Object*. 'The principal intention (in chronic distempers) is to restore the tone of the solid parts.'—*Arbuthnot*.

out to take any penalty for the same. This will preserve borrowing from any general stop or dryness—this will ease infinite borrowers in the country—this will, in good part, raise the price of land, because land purchased at sixteen years' purchase will yield six in the hundred, and somewhat more, whereas this rate of interest yields but five—this, by like reason, will encourage and edge industrious and profitable improvements, because many will rather venture in that kind, than take five in the hundred, especially having been used to greater profit. Secondly, let there be certain persons licenced to lend to known merchants upon usury, at a high rate, and let it be with the cautions following. Let the rate be, even with the merchant himself, somewhat more easy than that he used formerly to pay; for by that means all borrowers shall have some ease by this reformation, be he merchant or whosoever¹—let it be no bank, or common stock, but every man be master of his own money; not that I altogether dislike² banks, but they will hardly be brooked, in regard³ of certain suspicions. Let the State be answered⁴ some small matter for the licence, and the rest left to the lender; for if the abatement be but small, it will no whit⁵ discourage the lender; for he, for example, that took before ten or nine in the hundred, will sooner descend to eight in the hundred, than give over this trade of usury, and go from certain gains to gains of hazard. Let these licenced lenders be in number indefinite, but restrained to certain principal cities and towns of merchandise; for then they will be hardly able to colour⁶ other men's monies in the country, so as the licence of

¹ Whosoever. *Whoever* 'Whosoever should give the blow, the murder would be his. We are guilty of all the evil we might have hindered.'—*Bishop Hall*.

² Mislike. *Dislike*.

'And Israel, whom I lov'd so dear,
Mistaken me for his choice.'—*Milton*.

³ In regard. *On account*. See page 327.

⁴ Answer. *To pay*.

'Who studies day and night
To answer all the debts he owes to you.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁵ Whit. *In the least; in the smallest degree*. 'I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.'—2 *Cor.* xi. 5.

'We love, and are no whit regarded.'—*Sidney*.

⁶ Colour. *To pass for their own*. 'To colour a stranger's goods is, when a freeman allows a foreigner to enter goods at the Custom-house in his name.'—*Phillips*.

nine will not suck away the current rate of five; for no man will lend his monies far off, nor put them into unknown hands.

If it be objected that this doth in any sort authorise usury, which before was in some places but permissive, the answer is, that it is better to mitigate usury by declaration than to suffer it to rage by connivance.

ANNOTATIONS.

It is wonderful how late any right notions on this subject were introduced; and not even now have they been universally adopted. I have already remarked, in the notes to the Essay on 'Seditions and Troubles,' that the error of over-governing always prevails in the earlier stages of civilization, even as the young are more liable to it than the experienced. And that Bacon shared in this error is evident from his advocating sumptuary laws—the regulating of prices—the legislating against engrossers—prohibiting the laying down of land in pasture, &c. All these puerilities are to be found in the earlier laws of all countries. In this Essay on 'Usury,' he does not go the whole length of the prejudices existing in his time, though he partakes of them in a great degree. In his day, and long before, there were many who held it absolutely sinful to receive any interest for money, on the ground of the prohibition of it to the Israelites in their dealings with each other; though the Mosaic law itself proves the contrary, since it allows lending at interest to a stranger; and certainly the Israelites were not permitted to oppress and defraud strangers.

'Since there must be borrowing and lending, and men are so hard of heart as they will not lend freely'

It seems strange that a man of Bacon's acuteness should not have perceived—but it is far more strange that legislators in the nineteenth century should not have perceived—that there is no essential difference between the use of any other kind of property, and money, which represents, and is equivalent to, any and all kinds. It never occurred to Bacon, seemingly,

that no man is called hard-hearted for not letting his *land* or his *house* rent-free, or for requiring to be paid for the use of his horse, or his ship, or any other kind of property.

As for the lending of money making 'fewer merchants,' and 'causing money to lie still,' it is evident that this is the very reverse of the fact; as indeed is hinted in the Essay. Great part of the trade and manufactures in every prosperous country is carried on with borrowed capital, lent by those who have not the skill and leisure to carry on such business themselves; and who, if they were prevented from thus investing their capital, would be driven either to let their 'money lie still' in a strong box, or else to engage in a business for which they were not fitted.

If I build a mill or a ship, and let it to a manufacturer or merchant, every one would allow that this is a very fair way of investing capital; quite as fair, and much wiser, than if, being ignorant of manufactures and trade, I were to set up as a manufacturer or merchant. Now if, instead of this, I lend a merchant money to buy or build a ship for himself, or advance money to the manufacturer to erect his buildings and machinery, he will probably suit himself better than if I had taken this on myself, without his experience.

No doubt, advantage is often taken of a man's extreme necessity, to demand high interest, and exact payment with rigour. But it is equally true that advantage is taken, in some crowded town, of a man's extreme need of a night's lodging. And it is but too well known, that where there is an excessive competition for *land*, as almost the sole mode of obtaining a subsistence, it is likely that an exorbitant rent will be asked, and that this will be exacted with unbending severity. But who would thereupon propose that the letting of land should be prohibited, or that a maximum of rent should be fixed by law? For, legislative interposition in dealings between man and man, except for the prevention of fraud, generally increases the evil it seeks to remedy. A prohibition of interest, or—which is only a minor degree of the same error—a prohibition of any beyond a certain fixed rate of interest, has an effect similar to that of a like interference between the buyers and sellers of any other commodity. If, for example, in a time of scarcity it were enacted, on the ground that cheap food is desirable, that bread

and meat should not be sold beyond such and such a price, the result would be that every one would be driven—unless he would submit to be starved—to evade the law ; and he would have to pay for his food *more* than he otherwise would, to cover (1) the cost of the contrivances for the evasion of the law, and (2) a compensation to the seller for the risk, and also for the discredit, of that evasion. Even so, a man who is in want of money, and can find no one to lend it him at legal interest, is either driven (as Bacon himself remarks), to sell his property at a ruinous loss, or else he borrows of some Jew, who contrives to evade the law ; and he has to pay for that evasion. Suppose, for instance, he could borrow (if there were no usury laws) at eight per cent., he will have to pay, perhaps, virtually, twelve per cent., because (1) he has to resort to a man who incurs *disgrace* by his trade, and who will require a greater profit to compensate for the discredit ; and (2) he will have to receive part of his loan in goods which he does not want, at an exorbitant price, or in some other way to receive less, really, than he does nominally.

ESSAY XLII. OF YOUTH AND AGE.

A MAN that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time; but that happeneth rarely. Generally, youth is like the first cogitations, not so wise as the second, for there is a youth in thoughts as well as in ages; and yet the invention of young men is more lively than that of old, and imaginations stream into their minds better, and, as it were, more divinely. Natures that have much heat, and great and violent desires and perturbations, are not ripe for action till they have passed the meridian of their years; as it was with Julius Cæsar and Septimius Severus, of the latter of whom it is said, ‘Juventutem egit, erroribus, imo furoribus plenam:’¹ and yet he was the ablest emperor almost of all the list; but reposed² natures may do well in youth, as it is seen in Augustus Cæsar, Cosmus Duke of Florence, Gaston de Foix, and others. On the other side, heat and vivacity in age is an excellent composition³ for business. Young men are fitter to invent than to judge, fitter for execution than for counsel, and fitter for new projects than for settled business; for the experience of age, in things that fall within the compass of it, directeth them, but in new things abuseth⁴ them. The errors of young men are the ruin of business, but the errors of aged men amount but to this—that more might have been done, or sooner. Young men, in the conduct and manage⁵ of actions, embrace more than they can hold; stir more than they can quiet; fly to the end, without consideration of the means and degrees; pursue some few principles which they have chanced upon, absurdly; care not⁶ to innovate, which

¹ ‘His youth was not only full of errors, but of frantic passions.’—Spartian, *Vit. Sev.*

² Reposed. *Calm.* ‘With wondrous *reposedness* of mind, and gentle words, Reputation answered.’—*Translation of Boccacini*, 1626.

³ Composition. *Temperament.* See page 351.

⁴ Abuse. *To deceive; to lead astray.*

‘Nor be with all those tempting words *abused*.’—*Pope.*

⁵ Manage. *Management.*

‘The *manage* of my state.’—*Shakespeare.*

⁶ Care not. *Are not cautious.*

draws unknown inconveniences ; use extreme remedies at first ; and (that which doubleth all errors) will not acknowledge or retract them ; like an unready horse that will neither stop nor turn. Men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period,¹ but content themselves with a mediocrity of success. Certainly it is good to compound employments of both ; for that will be good for the present, because the virtues of either age may correct the defects of both ; and good for succession, that young men may be learners, while men in age are actors ; and, lastly, good for extern² accidents, because authority followeth old men, and favour and popularity youth ; but, for the moral part, perhaps, youth will have the pre-eminence, as age hath for the politic. A certain Rabbín, upon the text, ‘ Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams,’³ inferreth that young men are admitted nearer to God than old, because vision is a clearer revelation than a dream ; and, certainly, the more a man drinketh of the world, the more it intoxicateth ; and age doth profit⁴ rather in the powers of understanding, than in the virtues of the will and affections. There be some have an over-early ripeness in their years, which fadeth betimes : these are, first, such as have brittle wits, the edge whereof is soon turned ; such as was Hermogenes the rhetorician, whose books are exceeding subtle, who afterwards waxed⁵ stupid : a second sort is of those that have some natural dispositions which have better grace in youth than in age ; such as is a fluent and luxurious speech, which becomes youth well, but not age ; so Tully saith of Hortensius, ‘ Idem

¹ Period. *Completion ; perfection.* ‘ In light-conserving stones the light will appear greater or lesser, until they come to their utmost *period*.’—*Digby*.

² Extern. *External.*

‘ When my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart,
In compliment *extern*, ’tis not long after,
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve,
For daws to peck at.’—*Shakespeare*.

³ *Joel* ii. 28.

⁴ Profit. *To improve.* ‘ That thy *profiting* may appear unto all men.’—*1 Tim.* iv. 15. ‘ It is a great means of *profiting* yourself to copy diligently excellent designs.’—*Dryden*.

⁵ Waxed. *To grow ; to become.* ‘ Paul and Barnabas waxed bold.’—*Acts* xiii. 46.

manebat, neque idem decebat :'¹ the third is of such as take too high a strain at the first, and are magnanimous more than tract² of years can uphold ; as was Scipio Africanus, of whom Livy saith in effect, ' Ultima primis cedebant.'³

ANTITHETA ON YOUTH AND AGE.

PRO.

* * * * *

'Senes sibi sapiunt magis, aliis et reipublicæ minus.

'Old men have more wisdom for themselves, and less for others, and for the public.'

'Si conspici daretur, magis deformat animos, quam corpora, senectus.

'If the mind could be an object of sight, it would be seen that old age deforms it more than the body.'

'Senes omnia metuunt, præter Deos.

'Old men fear everything but the gods.'

CONTRA.

'Juventus penitentiae campus.

'Youth is the field for the seeds of repentance.'

'Ingenitus est juvenibus senilis auctoritatis contemptus; ut quisque suo periculo sapiat.

'A contempt for the judgments of age is implanted in youth, in order that every one may be sentenced to learn wisdom at his own risk.'

'Tempus, ad quæ consilia non advocatur, nec rata habet.

'When time is not called in as a counsellor, neither does it ratify the decision.'

ANNOTATIONS.

Many readers of Aristotle's admirable description (in the *Rhetoric*) of the Young and the Old, (in which he gives so decided a preference to the character of the young,) forget, that he is describing the *same* man at different periods of life, since the old must *have* been young. As it is, he gives just the right view of the character of the 'natural man,' (as the Apostle Paul expresses it,) which is, to become—on the whole,—gradually

¹ 'He remained the same; but the same was no longer becoming to him.'—Cic. *Brut.* 95.

² Tract. *Course.*

'My fancies all are fled,
And tract of time begins to weave
Grey haire upon my head.'—Lord *Vaux*.

(This is supposed to be the original of Shakespere's grave-digger's song in *Hamlet*.)

³ 'The last fell short of the first.'—Livy, xxxviii. 53.

worse, when no superior and purifying principle has been implanted. Some people fancy that a man grows good by growing old, without taking any particular pains about it. But 'The older the crab-tree, the more crabs it bears,' says the proverb. Unless a correcting principle be *engrafted*, though a man may, perhaps, outgrow the vices and follies of youth, other vices, and even worse, will come in their stead. If, indeed, a wilding tree be grafted, when young, with a good fruit tree, then, the older it is, if it be kept well pruned, the more good fruit it will bear.

'A man that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time.'

Many are apt to overlook, with regard to mental qualifications, what Bacon has here said, that the junior in years may be the senior in experience. And this may be, not only from his having had better opportunities, but also from his understanding better how to learn from experience. 'Several different men, who have all had equal, or even the very same, experience,—that is, have been witnesses or agents in the same transactions,—will often be found to resemble so many different men looking at the same book: one, perhaps, though he distinctly sees black marks on white paper, has never learned his letters; another can read, but is a stranger to the *language* in which the book is written; another has an *acquaintance* with the language, but understands it imperfectly; another is familiar with the *language*, but is a stranger to the subject of the book, and lacks power or previous instruction to enable him fully to take in the author's drift; while another again perfectly comprehends the whole.

'The object that strikes the eye is to all of these persons the same; the difference of the impressions produced on the mind of each is referable to the differences in their minds.'¹

And this explains the fact, which I have already touched upon in the notes on the Essay 'Of seeming Wise,' namely, the great discrepancy that we find in the results of what are called Experience and Common-sense, as contradistinguished from Theory.

¹ *Political Economy*, Lect. iii.

‘Men are apt not to consider with sufficient attention, what it is that constitutes Experience in each point ; so that frequently one man shall have credit for much Experience in what relates to the matter in hand, and another, who, perhaps, possesses as much, or more, shall be underrated as wanting it. The vulgar, of all ranks, need to be warned, first, that *time* alone does not constitute Experience ; so that many years may have passed over a man’s head, without his even having had the same opportunities of acquiring it, as another, much younger : secondly, that the longest practice in conducting any business in *one* way, does not necessarily confer any experience in conducting it in a different way. For instance, an experienced Husbandman, or Minister of State, in Persia, would be much at a loss in Europe ; and if they had some things less to learn than an entire novice, on the other hand they would have much to unlearn ; and, thirdly, that merely being conversant about a certain class of *subjects*, does not confer Experience in a case, where the *Operations*, and the *End* proposed, are different. It is said that there was an Amsterdam merchant, who had dealt largely in corn all his life, who had never seen a field of wheat growing : this man had doubtless acquired, by Experience, an accurate judgment of the qualities of each description of corn,—of the best methods of storing it,—of the arts of buying and selling it at proper times, &c. ; but he would have been greatly at a loss in its *cultivation* ; though he had been, in a certain way, long *conversant* about corn. Nearly similar is the Experience of a practised lawyer, (supposing him to be nothing more,) in a case of *Legislation*. Because he has been long *conversant about Law*, the unreflecting attribute great weight to his legislative judgment ; whereas his constant habits of fixing his thoughts on what the law *is*, and withdrawing it from the irrelevant question of what the law *ought* to be ;—his careful observance of a multitude of rules, (which afford the more scope for the display of his skill, in proportion as they are arbitrary and unaccountable,) with a studied indifference as to that which is foreign from his business, the *convenience* or *inconvenience* of those Rules—may be expected to operate unfavourably on his judgment in questions of Legislation : and are likely to counterbalance the advantages of his superior knowledge, even in such points as do bear on the question.

‘Again, a person who is more properly to be regarded as an Antiquarian than anything else, will sometimes be regarded as high authority in some subject respecting which he has perhaps little or no real knowledge or capacity, if he have collected a multitude of facts relative to it. Suppose for instance a man of much reading, and of retentive memory, but of unphilosophical mind, to have amassed a great collection of particulars respecting the writers on some science,—the times when they flourished,—the numbers of their followers,—the editions of their works, &c., it is not unlikely he may lead both others and himself into the belief that he is a great authority in that science; when perhaps he may in reality know—though a great deal *about* it—nothing *of* it. Such a man’s mind, compared with that of one really versed in the subject, is like an antiquarian armoury, full of curious old weapons,—many of them the more precious from having been long since superseded,—as compared with a well-stocked arsenal, containing all the most approved warlike implements fit for actual service.

‘In matters connected with Political-economy, the *experience* of *practical* men is often appealed to in opposition to those who are called theorists; even though the latter perhaps are deducing conclusions from a wide induction of facts, while the experience of the others will often be found only to amount to their having been long conversant with the details of office, and having all that time gone on in a certain beaten track, from which they never tried, or witnessed, or even imagined a deviation.

‘So also the authority derived from experience, of a *practical* miner,—*i. e.* one who has wrought all his life in one mine,—will sometimes delude a speculator into a vain search for metal or coal, against the opinion perhaps of *Theorists*, *i. e.* persons of extensive geological observation.

‘It may be added, that there is a proverbial maxim which bears witness to the advantage sometimes possessed by an observant bystander over those actually engaged in any transaction:—‘The looker-on often sees more of the game than the players.’ Now the looker-on is precisely (in Greek Θεωρῶνς) the *Theorist*.

‘When then you find any one *contrasting*, in this and in other subjects, what he calls ‘experience,’ with ‘theory,’ you will usually perceive, on attentive examination, that he is in reality

comparing the results of a *confined*, with that of a *wider* experience;—a more imperfect and crude theory, with one more cautiously framed, and based on a more copious induction.’¹

‘*The experience of age in new things abuseth them.*’

The old are more liable to the ‘rashness of the *horse*,’ and the younger, to that of the *moth*; the distinction between which I have before pointed out. The old again are more likely than the young, to claim, and to give, an undue deference to the judgment, in reference to some *new* plan or system, of those who are the most thoroughly familiar with the old one. On this point I have already dwelt in my remarks on Innovation.

‘*Natures that have much heat are not ripe for action till they have passed the meridian of their years.*’

There is a strange difference in the ages at which different persons acquire such *maturity* as they are capable of, and at which some of those who have greatly distinguished themselves have done, and been, something remarkable. Some of them have left the world at an earlier age than that at which others have begun their career of eminence. It was remarked to the late Dr. Arnold by a friend, as a matter of curiosity, that several men who have filled a considerable page in history have lived but forty-seven years; (Philip of Macedon, Joseph Addison, Fielding the novelist, Sir William Jones, Nelson, Pitt,) and he was told in a jocular way to beware of the forty-seventh year. He was at that time in robust health; but he died at forty-seven! Alexander died at thirty-two; Sir Stamford Raffles at forty-five: Clive, one of the most extraordinary generals that ever existed, at forty-nine. Sir Isaac Newton did indeed live to a great age; but it is said that all his discoveries were made before he was forty; so that he *might* have died at that age, and been as celebrated as he is.

On the other hand, Herschel is said to have taken to astronomy at forty-seven. Swedenborg, if he had died at sixty, would have been remembered by those that did remember him,

¹ See *Elements of Rhetoric*, Part II., ch. iii., § 5, pp. 221—224.

merely as a sensible worthy man, and a very considerable mathematician. The strange fancies which took possession of him, and which survive in the sect which goes by his name, all came on after that age.

Some persons resemble certain trees, such as the nut, which flowers in February, and ripens its fruit in September; or the juniper and the arbutus, which take a whole year or more to perfect their fruit; and others the cherry, which takes between two and three months.

*'There be some have an over early ripeness in their years, which
fadeth betimes.'*

One may meet with some who are clever as children, and without falling back, remain stationary at a certain age, and thus are neither more nor less than clever children all their life. You may find one who has thus stood still at about nine or ten; another at about fourteen; another at about seventeen or eighteen, and so on. And it is a curious thing to meet, at pretty long intervals, a person whom one has known as a remarkably forward, and (supposed) promising youth, and to find that at forty, fifty, sixty, he has hardly either gained or lost anything since he was in his teens. An elder-tree will grow as much in the first three or four years as an oak in ten or twelve; but at thirty years the oak will have outgrown the elder, and will continue gaining on it ever after.

As for the decay of mental faculties which often takes place in old age, every one is aware of it; but many overlook one kind of it which is far from uncommon; namely, when a man of superior intelligence, without falling into anything like dotage, sinks into an ordinary man. Whenever there is a mixture of genius with imbecility, every one perceives that a decay has taken place. But when a person of great intellectual eminence becomes (as is sometimes the case) an ordinary average man, just such as many have been all their life, no one is likely to suspect that the faculties have been impaired by age, except those who have seen much of him in his brighter days.

Even so, no one, on looking at an ordinary dwelling-house in good repair, would suspect that it had been once a splendid palace; but when we view a stately old castle, or cathedral,

partly in ruins, we see at once that it cannot be what it originally was.

This kind of decline is furthered, and sometimes perhaps in great measure caused, by a man's associating for a long time chiefly with persons of inferior mind, and gradually imbibing their prejudices, and discontinuing such studies and such mental exercise as they have no sympathy with. He thus becomes what has been called a *Palimpsest*. A literal 'palimpsest' is—as is generally known—a parchment from which the original manuscript—perhaps some precious work of an ancient classic—has been scraped off, to make room for some monkish legend, or mediæval treatise. But by holding it in a strong light, a person of good eyes, may, by great patience, make out (as Signor Angelo Maio has) the faint traces of the old writing.

A man who in early life has resided in a University, or a Metropolis, among men of superior mind, and of literary and scientific tastes, will sometimes retire for the rest of his life to some locality where he is surrounded by persons comparatively unintellectual and narrow-minded; and will then perhaps have so completely let himself down to their level, that one of his former associates would hardly recognise him: though in the course of conversation he may by degrees recall some portion of the former man. He may, as it were, gaze steadily on the Palimpsest till he perceives the traces of the original writing, which had been nearly obliterated, and replaced by a legend.

The decay which is most usually *noticed* in old people, both by others and by themselves, is a decay of *memory*. But this is perhaps partly from its being a defect easily to be detected and distinctly proved. When a decay of *judgment* takes place—which is perhaps oftener the case than is commonly supposed—the party himself is not likely to be conscious of it; and his friends are more likely to overlook it, and even when they do perceive it, to be backward in giving him warning, for fear of being met with such a rebuff as Gil Blas received in return for his candour, from the Archbishop, his patron.

It is remarkable, that there is nothing less promising than, in early youth, a certain full-formed, settled, and, as it may be called, *adult* character. A lad who has, to a degree that excites wonder and admiration, the character and demeanour of an intelligent man of mature age, will probably be *that*, and

nothing more, all his life, and will cease accordingly to be anything remarkable, because it was the precocity alone that ever made him so. It is remarked by greyhound-fanciers that a well-formed, compact-shaped puppy never makes a fleet dog. They see more promise in the loose-jointed, awkward, clumsy ones. And even so, there is a kind of crudity and unsettledness in the minds of those young persons who turn out ultimately the most eminent.

'Some natural dispositions which have better grace in youth than in age, such as is a fluent and luxuriant speech.'

It is remarkable, that, in point of style of writing, Bacon himself, at different periods of life, showed differences just opposite to what most would have expected. His earlier writings are the most unornamented; and he grew more ornate as he advanced. So also Burke. His earliest work, *On the Sublime*, is in a brief, dry, philosophical style; and he became florid to an excess as he grew older.

ESSAY XLIII. OF BEAUTY.

VIRTUE is like a rich stone, best plain set ; and surely virtue is best in a body that is comely, though not of delicate features, and that hath rather dignity of presence than beauty of aspect ; neither is it almost¹ seen that very beautiful persons are otherwise of great virtue, as if nature were rather busy not to err, than in labour to produce excellency,² and therefore they prove accomplished, but not of great spirit, and study rather behaviour than virtue. But this holds not always ; for Augustus Cæsar, Titus Vespasianus, Philip le Bel of France, Edward IV. of England, Alcibiades of Athens, Ismael the sophy³ of Persia, were all high and great spirits, and yet the most beautiful men of their times. In beauty, that of favour⁴ is more than that of colour, and that of decent⁵ and gracious⁶ motion more than that of favour. That is the best part of beauty which a picture cannot express, no, nor the first sight of the life. There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion. A man cannot tell whether Apelles or Albert Durer were the more⁷ trifler ; whereof the one

¹ Almost. *For the most part ; generally.* ‘Who is there *almost*, whose mind at some time or other, love or anger, fear or grief, has not fastened to some clog, that it could not turn itself to any other object ?’

² Excellency. *Excellence.* ‘That the *excellency* of the power may be of God, and not of us.’—2 Cor. iv. 7.

³ Sophy. *Sultan.*

‘With letters, him in cautious wise,
They straightway sent to Persia ;
But wrote to the *Sophy* him to kill.’—

—*St. George and the Dragon.*

⁴ Favour. *Countenance.*

‘I know your *favour* well, Percy,
Though now you have no sea-cap on your head.’—*Shakespere.*

⁵ Decent. *Becoming ; fit.* ‘All pastimes, generally, which be joyned with labour and in open place, and on the day-lighte, be not only comelie and *decent*, but verie necessarie for a courtly gentleman.’—*Roger Ascham.*

‘Those thousand *decencies* that daily flow
From all her words and actions.’—*Milton.*

⁶ Gracious. *Graceful.*

‘There was ne’er such a *gracious* creature born.’—*Shakespere.*

⁷ More. *Greater ; great.* ‘The *moreness* of Christ’s virtues are not measured by worldly *moreness.*’—*Wickliff.*

would make a personage by geometrical proportions, the other, by taking the best parts out of divers¹ faces, to make one excellent. Such personages, I think, would please nobody but the painter that made them—not but I think a painter may make a better face than ever was, but he must do it by a kind of felicity (as a musician that maketh an excellent air in music), and not by rule. A man shall see faces, that if you examine them part by part you shall find never a good, and yet altogether do well. If it be true that the principal part of beauty is in decent motion, certainly it is no marvel² though persons in years seem many times more amiable: ‘*Pulchrorum autumnus pulcher*’³—for no youth can be comely but by pardon, and considering the youth as to make up the comeliness. Beauty is as summer-fruits, which are easy to corrupt, and cannot last, and, for the most part, it makes a dissolute youth, and an age a little out of countenance; but yet certainly again, if it light well, it maketh virtue shine, and vices blush.

¹ Divers. *Many*. ‘For that *divers* of the English do maintain and succour sundry thieves, robbers, and rebels, because that the same do put them into their safeguard and counsel . . .’—*Statutes and Ordinances* made in the 4th year of Henry VI., before the Most Reverend Richard, Archbishop of Dublin, and Lord Justice of Ireland, A.D. 1440.

² Marvel. *A wonder*. ‘No *marvel*; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.’—2 *Cor.* xi. 14.

³ ‘The autumn of the beautiful is beautiful.’

ESSAY XLIV. OF DEFORMITY.

DEFORMED persons are commonly even with nature ; for as nature hath done ill by them, so do they by nature, being for the most part (as the Scripture saith) ‘ void of natural affection :’¹ and so they have their revenge of nature.² Certainly there is a consent³ between the body and the mind, and ‘ where nature erreth in the one she ventureth in the other’ (‘ Ubi peccat in uno, periclitatur in altero’): but because there is in man an election touching the frame of his mind, and a necessity in the frame of his body, the stars of natural inclination are sometimes obscured by the sun of discipline and virtue ; therefore, it is good to consider of deformity, not as a sign which is more deceivable, but as a cause which seldom faileth of the effect. Whosoever hath anything fixed in his person that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur in himself to rescue and deliver himself from scorn ; therefore, all deformed persons are extreme⁴ bold—first, as in their own defence, as being exposed to scorn, but in process of time by a general habit. Also, it stirreth in them industry, and especially of this kind, to watch and observe the weakness of others, that they may have somewhat to repay. Again, in their superiors, it quencheth jealousy towards them, as persons that they think they may at pleasure despise ; and it layeth their competitors and emulators asleep, as never believing they should be in possibility of advancement, till they see them in possession ; so that upon the matter,⁵ in a great wit, deformity is an advantage to rising. Kings, in ancient times (and at this present, in

¹ Rom. i. 31.

² ‘ Then since the Heavens have shaped my body so,
Let Hell make crook’t my mind to answer it.’

Shakespeare’s *Richard III.*

³ Consent. *Agreement.*

‘ With one *consent*, let all the earth
To God their cheerful voices raise.’—Tate’s *Version of Psalm c.*

⁴ Extreme. *Extremely.*

⁵ Matter. *Whole.* (‘ Upon the matter’—*On the whole.*) ‘ He grants the deluge to have come so very near the *matter*, that but very few escaped.’—*Tillotson.*

some countries), were wont¹ to put great trust in eunuchs, because they that are envious towards all are obnoxious² and officious towards one: but yet their trust towards them hath rather been as to good spials³ and good whisperers than good magistrates and officers; and much like is the reason of deformed persons. Still the ground is, they will, if they be of spirit, seek to free themselves from scorn, which must be either by virtue or malice;⁴ and therefore, let it not be marvelled,⁵ if sometimes they prove excellent persons; as was Agesilaus, Zanger the son of Solyman, Æsop, Gasca, president of Peru; and Socrates may go likewise amongst them, with others.

ANNOTATION.

Bacon is speaking principally of *original* deformities; not such as result from accident or disease. And it is very remarkable how much less tendency these latter have, than the other, to produce such effects as he is speaking of.

¹ Wont. *To be accustomed.* 'Now at the feast the governor was wont to release unto them a prisoner.'—*Matt.* xxvii. 15.

'I this night, have dream'd,
If dream'd, not as I oft am wont, of thee.'—*Milton.*

² Obnoxious. *Subject; submissive.* 'The writings of lawyers, which are tied and *obnoxious* to their particular laws.'—*Bacon.*

³ Spials. *Spies.*

'The Prince's *spials* have informed me.'—*Shakespeare.*

⁴ Malice. *Vice.* (Not, as now, restricted to malevolence.) 'In *malice* be ye children.'—*I Cor.* xiv. 20. 'Not using your liberty for a cloak of *maliciousness.*'—*I Pet.* ii. 16.

⁵ Marvel. *To wonder at.* 'Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again.'—*John* iii.

ESSAY XLV. OF BUILDING.

HOUSES are built to live in, and not to look on; therefore, let use be preferred before¹ uniformity, except where both may be had. Leave the goodly fabrics of houses, for beauty, only to the enchanted palaces of the poets, who build them with small cost. He that builds a fair house upon an ill seat,² committeth himself to prison—neither do I reckon it an ill seat only where the air is unwholesome, but likewise where the air is unequal; as you shall see many fine seats set upon a knap³ of ground, environed with higher hills round about it, whereby the heat of the sun is pent in, and the wind gathereth as in troughs; so as⁴ you shall have, and that suddenly, as great diversity of heat and cold as if you dwelt in several places. Neither is it ill⁵ air only that maketh an ill seat, but ill ways, ill markets; and if you consult with Momus, ill neighbours. I speak not of many more; want of water, want of wood, shade, and shelter, want of fruitfulness, and mixture of grounds of several natures; want of prospect, want of level grounds, want of places at some near distance for sports of hunting, hawking, and races; too near the sea, too remote; having the commodity⁶ of navigable rivers, or the discommodity of their overflowing; too far off from great cities, which may hinder business; or too

¹ Preferred before. *Preferred to.*

‘O Spirit that dost prefer
Before all temples, the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me.’—*Milton.*

² Seat. *Site.* ‘It remaineth now that we find out the *seat* of Eden.’—*Raleigh.*

³ Knap. *A prominence; a knoll.*

‘Hark, on *knap* of yonder hill,
Some sweet shepherd tunes his quill.’—*Brown.*

⁴ As. *That.* See page 26.

⁵ Ill. *Bad.*

‘There some *ill* planet reigns.’—*Shakespeare.*

⁶ Commodity. *Advantage; convenience.* See page 439.

near them, which lurcheth¹ all provisions, and maketh everything dear; where a man hath a great living laid together, and where he is scanted;² all which, as it is impossible perhaps to find together, so it is good to know them, and think of them, that a man may take as many as he can; and, if he have several dwellings, that he sort³ them so, that what he wanteth in the one he may find in the other. Lucullus answered Pompey well, who, when he saw his stately galleries and rooms so large and lightsome, in one of his houses, said, 'Surely, an excellent place for summer, but how do you in winter?' Lucullus answered, 'Why do you not think me as wise as some fowls are, that ever change their abode towards the winter?'

To pass from the seat to the house itself, we will do as Cicero doth in the orator's art, who writes books *De Oratore*, and a book he entitles *Orator*; whereof the former delivers the precepts of the art, and the latter the perfection. We will therefore describe a princely palace, making a brief model thereof; for it is strange to see, now in Europe, such huge buildings as the Vatican and Escorial, and some others be, and yet scarce a very fair⁴ room in them.

First, therefore, I say, you cannot have a perfect palace, except you have two several⁵ sides; a side for the banquet, as is spoken of in the book of Esther, and a side for the household; the one for feasts and triumphs,⁷ and the other for dwelling. I understand both these sides to be not only returns, but parts of the front; and to be uniform without, though severally partitioned within; and to be on both sides of a great and stately tower in the midst of the front, that, as it were, joineth them together on either hand. I would have, on the

¹ Lurch. *To absorb*. (From *lourche*—a game in which the stakes are put into a box, where the loser is obliged to leave them. Hence perhaps the expression 'to be left in the lurch'.)

² Scanted. *Limited; restricted*. 'I am scanted in the pleasure of dwelling on your actions.'—*Dryden*.

³ Sort. *To chuse*.

'To sort some gentlemen well skilled in music.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁴ Plut. *Vit. Lucull.* 30.

⁵ Fair. *Handsome*.

'Carry him to my fairest chamber.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁶ Several. *Separate*. 'He dwelt in a several house.'—2 *Kings* xv. 5.

⁷ Triumphs. *Shows on festive occasions*. See page 411.

side of the banquet in front, one only goodly room above stairs, of some forty feet high ; and under it a room for a dressing, or preparing place, at times of triumphs. On the other side, which is the household side, I wish it divided at the first into a hall and a chapel, with a partition between, both of good state and bigness,¹ and those not to go all the length, but to have at the farther end a winter and a summer parlour, both fair ; and under these rooms a fair and large cellar sunk under ground ; and likewise some privy kitchens, with butteries and pantries, and the like. As for the tower, I would have it two storeys, of eighteen feet high a-piece above the two wings ; and goodly leads upon the top, railed with statues interposed ; and the same tower to be divided into rooms, as shall be thought fit. The stairs likewise to the upper rooms, let them be upon a fair and open newel, and finely railed in with images of wood cast into a brass colour, and a very fair landing place at the top. But this to be, if you do not point² any of the lower rooms for a dining place of servants ; for otherwise you shall have the servants' dinner after your own, for the steam of it will come up as in a tunnel. And so much for the front, only I understand the height of the first stairs to be sixteen feet, which is the height of the lower room.

Beyond this front is there to be a fair court, but three sides of it of a far lower building than the front ; and in all the four corners of that court fair staircases, cast into turrets on the outside, and not within the rows of buildings themselves ; but those towers are not to be of the height of the front, but rather proportionable to the lower building. Let the court not be paved, for that striketh up a great heat in summer, and much cold in winter, but only some side alleys with a cross, and the quarters to graze, being kept shorn, but not too near shorn. The row of return on the banquet side, let it be all stately galleries ; in which galleries let there be three or five fine cupolas in the length of it, placed at equal distance, and fine coloured windows of several works ; on the household side,

¹ Bigness. *Size, whether great or small.* 'Several sorts of rays make vibrations of several bignesses.'—*Sir Isaac Newton.*

² Point. *To appoint.*

'To celebrate the solemn bridall cheere

'Twixt Peleus and dame Thetis *pointed* there.'—*Spenser.*

chambers of presence and ordinary entertainments with some bed-chambers; and let all three sides be a double house, without thorough lights on the sides, that you may have rooms from the sun, both for forenoon and afternoon. Cast¹ it also that you may have rooms both for summer and winter, shady for summer and warm for winter. You shall have sometimes fair houses so full of glass, that one cannot tell where to become² to be out of the sun or cold. For embowed³ windows, I hold them of good use; in cities, indeed, upright do better, in respect of the uniformity towards the street; for they be pretty retiring places for conference, and, besides, they keep both the wind and sun off—for that which would strike almost through the room, doth scarce pass the window; but let them be but few, four in the court, on the sides only.

Beyond this court let there be an inward⁴ court, of the same square and height, which is to be environed with the garden on all sides; and in the inside, cloistered on all sides upon decent and beautiful arches, as high as the first storey; on the under storey, towards the garden, let it be turned to a grotto, or place of shade, or estivation; and only have opening and windows towards the garden, and be level upon the floor, no whit⁵ sunk under ground, to avoid all dampishness; and let there be a fountain, or some fair work of statues in the midst of the court, and to be paved as the other court was. These buildings to be for privy lodgings on both sides, and the end for privy galleries; whereof you must foresee that one of them be for an infirmary, if the prince or any special person should be sick, with chambers, bed-chamber, ‘antecamera’ [‘anti-chamber’],

¹ Cast. *To plan.*

‘From that day forth, I *cast* in careful mind
To keep her out.’—*Spenser.*

² Become. *To betake oneself.*

‘I cannot joy until I be resolved
Where our right valiant father
Is *become*.’—*Shakespere.*

³ Embowed. *Bowed.*

‘I saw a bull as white as driven snow,
With gilden horns, *embowed* like the moon.’—*Spenser.*

⁴ Inward. *Inner.* ‘Though our outward man perish, yet the *inward* man is renewed day by day.’—2 *Cor.* iv.

⁵ Whit. *The least degree.* See page 442.

and 'recamera,' ['retiring-chamber,' or 'back-chamber'] joining to it; this upon the second storey. Upon the ground storey, a fair gallery, open, upon pillars; and upon the third storey likewise, an open gallery upon pillars, to take the prospect and freshness of the garden. At both corners of the farther side, by way of return, let there be two delicate or rich cabinets, daintily¹ paved, richly hanged,² glazed with crystalline glass, and a rich cupola in the midst, and all other elegance that may be thought upon. In the upper gallery, too, I wish that there may be, if the place will yield it, some fountains running in divers³ places from the wall, with some fine avoidances.⁴ And thus much for the model of the palace; save that you must have, before you come to the front, three courts—a green court, plain, with a wall about it; a second court of the same, but more garnished with little turrets, or rather embellishments, upon the wall; and a third court, to make a square with the front, but not to be built, nor yet enclosed with a naked wall, but enclosed with terraces leaded aloft, and fairly garnished on the three sides, and cloistered on the inside with pillars, and not with arches below. As for offices, let them stand at distance, with some low galleries to pass from them to the palace itself.

¹ Daintily. *Elegantly*. See page 1.

² Hanged. *Hung* (with draperies). 'Music is better in rooms wainscotted than hanged.'—*Bacon*.

³ Divers. *Many*. See page 223.

⁴ Avoidances. *Water-courses*. 'The two avoidances or passages of water.'—*Statute 8th year of King Henry VII.*

ESSAY XLVI. OF GARDENS.

GOD ALMIGHTY first planted a garden, and, indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures; it is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man, without which building and palaces are but gross handyworks: and a man shall ever see, that when ages grow to civility¹ and elegance,² men come to build stately, sooner than to garden finely; as if gardening were the greater perfection. I do hold it, in the royal ordering of gardens, there ought to be gardens for all the months in the year, in which, severally, things of beauty³ may be then in season. For December and January, and the latter part of November, you must take such things as are green all winter;⁴ holly, ivy, bays, juniper, cypress-trees, yew, pines, fir-trees, rosemary, lavender; periwinkle, the white, the purple, and the blue; germander, flag, orange-trees, lemon-trees, and myrtles, if they be stoved; and sweet marjoram, warm set. There followeth, for the latter part of January and February, the mezereon tree, which then blossoms; crocus vernus, both the yellow and the grey; primroses, anemones, the early tulip, hyacinthus orientalis, chamaïris, fritellaria. For March, there come violets, especially the single blue, which are the earliest; the early daffodil, the daisy, the almond-tree in blossom, the peach-tree in blossom, the cornelian-tree in blossom, sweetbriar. In April, follow the double white violet, the wall-flower, the stock-gilliflower, the cowslip, flower-de-luces,⁵ and lilies of all natures; rosemary-flowers, the tulip, the double peony, the pale daffodil, the French honeysuckle, the cherry-tree in blossom, the damascene and plum-trees in blossom,

¹ Civility. *Civilization.*

‘Wheresoe’er her conquering eagles fled,
Arts, learning, and *civility* were spread.’—*Denham.*

² Elegancy. See page 411.

³ Things of beauty. *Beautiful things.*

‘*A thing of beauty* is a joy for ever!’

⁴ As for the cherry-laurel, the rhododendron, and even the laurustinus and the ilex, though natives of Portugal, Bacon seems not to have known them. But it is strange he does not mention the box, which is indigenous. Evelyn notices it; but with a caution against placing it too near the house, on account of its odour; which, to him, it seems was offensive, though, to others, a most delicious fragrance.

⁵ Flower-de-luces. *The iris.*

the white thorn in leaf, the lilac-tree. In May and June come pinks of all sorts, especially the blush pink; roses of all kinds, except the musk, which comes later; honeysuckles, strawberries, bugloss, columbine, the French marigold, flos Africanus, cherry-tree in fruit, ribes,¹ figs in fruit, rasp,² vine flowers, lavender in flowers, the sweet satyrian, with the white flower: herba muscaria, lilium convallium, the apple-tree in blossom. In July come gilliflowers of all varieties, musk roses, the lime-tree in blossom, early pears, and plums in fruit, gennittings,³ quodlins.⁴ In August come plums of all sorts in fruit, pears, apricocks,⁵ barberries,⁶ filberds,⁷ musk melons, monks-hoods, of all colours. In September come grapes, apples, poppies of all colours, peaches, melocotones,⁸ nectarines, cornelians,⁹ warden,¹⁰ quinces. In October and the beginning of November come services,¹¹ medlars, bullaces, roses cut or removed to come late, hollyoaks,¹² and such like. These particulars are for the climate of London; but my meaning is perceived, that you may have *ver perpetuum*,¹³ as the place affords.

And because the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air (where it comes and goes, like the warbling of music) than in

¹ Ribes. *Currants.*

² Rasps. *Raspberries.*

‘Now will the corinths, now the *rasps*, supply
Delicious draughts.’—*Phillips.*

³ Gennittings. *Jennethings* (June-eating; but supposed by some to be a corruption from Janeton, being so called after a Scotch lady of that name).

⁴ Quodlins. *Codlins.*

⁵ Apricocks. *Apricots.*

‘Go bind thou up yon dangling *apricocks*,
Which, like unruly children, make their sire
Stoop with oppression of their prodigal weight.’—*Shakespeare.*

⁶ Barberries. *Berberries.*

⁷ Filberds. *Filberts.*

‘I’ll bring thee
To clustering *filberds*.’—*Shakespeare.*

⁸ Melocotone. *A large peach.*

⁹ Cornelians. *Cherries.*

¹⁰ Warden. *A large keeping pear.*

‘Now must all shoots of pears alike be set,
Crustinian, Syrian pears, and *wardens* great.’—*May’s Virgil.*

¹¹ Services. *A plant and fruit* (Sorbus). ‘October is drawn in a garment of yellow and carnation; in his left hand a basket of *services*, medlars, and other fruits that ripen late.’—*Peacham.*

¹² Hollyoaks. *Hollyhocks.* ‘*Hollyoaks* far exceed poppies for their durability, and are far more ornamental.’—*Mortimer.*

¹³ A perpetual spring.

the hand, therefore nothing is more fit for that delight, than to know what be the flowers and plants that do best perfume the air. Roses, damask and red, are fast¹ flowers of their smell; so that you may walk by a whole row of them, and find nothing of their sweetness, yea,² though it be in a morning's dew. Bays, likewise, yield no smell as they grow, rosemary little, nor sweet marjoram; that which, above all others, yields the sweetest smell in the air, is the violet; especially the white double violet, which comes twice a-year—about the middle of April, and about Bartholomew-tide. Next to that is the musk rose; then the strawberry leaves dying, with a most excellent cordial smell; then the flower of the vines—it is a little dust like the dust of a bent,³ which grows upon the cluster in the first coming forth—then sweetbriar, then wall-flowers, which are very delightful to be set under a parlour or lower chamber window; then pinks and gilliflowers,⁴ especially the matted pink and clove gilliflowers; then the flowers of the lime-tree; then the honeysuckles, so they be somewhat afar off. Of bean-flowers I speak not, because they are field flowers; but those which perfume the air most delightfully, not passed by as the rest, but being trodden upon and crushed, are three, that is, burnet, wild thyme, and water-mints; therefore, you are to set whole alleys of them, to have the pleasure when you walk or tread.

For gardens (speaking of those which are, indeed, prince-like,⁵ as we have done of buildings), the contents ought not well

¹ Fast. *Tenacious.*

‘Yet all this while in a most *fast* sleep.’—*Shakespeare.*

² Yea. *Nay: not only this, but more than this.* ‘For behold this self-same thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, what clearing of yourselves, *yea* what indignation, *yea* what fear, *yea* what vehement desire, *yea* what zeal, *yea* what revenge.’—2 Cor. vii. 11.

‘I am weary; *yea* my memory is tired.’—*Shakespeare.*

³ Bent. *Bent-grass.*

‘His spear a *bent* both stiff and strong,
And well near of two inches long.’—*Drayton.*

‘June is drawn in a mantle of dark grass green upon a garland of *bents*, king-cups, and maiden-hair.’—*Peacham.*

⁴ This name probably comes from the old French *gilofre*, for *girofle*, a clove, derived from caryophyllus.

⁵ Prince-like. *Princely.*

‘The wrongs he did me have nothing *prince-like*.’—*Shakespeare.*

to be under thirty acres of ground, and to be divided into three parts; a green in the entrance, a heath or desert in the going forth, and the main garden in the midst, besides alleys on both sides; and I like well that four acres of ground be assigned to the green, six to the heath, four and four to either¹ side, and twelve to the main garden. The green hath two pleasures: the one, because nothing is more pleasant to the eye than green grass kept finely shorn; the other, because it will give you a fair alley in the midst, by which you may go in front upon a stately hedge, which is to enclose the garden: but because the alley will be long, and, in great heat of the year, or day, you ought not to buy the shade in the garden by going in the sun through the green, therefore you are, of either side the green, to plant a covert alley, upon carpenters' work, about twelve feet in height, by which you may go in shade into the garden. As for the making of knots, or figures, with divers-coloured² earths, that they may lie under the windows of the house on that side on which the garden stands, they be but toys: you may see as good sights many times in tarts. The garden is best to be square, encompassed on all the four sides with a stately arched hedge; the arches to be upon pillars of carpenters' work, of some ten feet high, and six feet broad, and the spaces between of the same dimensions with the breadth of the arch. Over the arches let there be an entire hedge of some four feet high, framed also upon carpenters' work; and upon the upper hedge, over every arch, a little turret with a belly³ enough to receive a cage of birds: and over every space between the arches some other little figure, with broad plates of round coloured glass gilt, for the sun to play upon: but this hedge I intend to be raised upon a bank, not steep, but gently slope,⁴ of some six feet, set all with flowers. Also, I under-

¹ Either. *Each.* See page 346.

² Divers-coloured. *Of various colours.*

'Smiling Cupids,
With divers-coloured fans.'—*Shakespeare.*

³ Belly. See page 231.

⁴ Slope. *Sloping.*

'Murmuring waters fall
Down the *slope* hills, dispersed, or in a lake,
That to the fringed banks, with myrtle crown'd,
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.'—*Milton.*

stand that this square of the garden shall not be the whole breadth of the ground, but to leave on either side ground enough for diversity of side alleys, unto which the two covert alleys of the green may deliver you ; but there must be no alleys with hedges at either end of this great enclosure—not at the hither end, for letting¹ your prospect upon this fair hedge from the green—nor at the farther end, for letting your prospect from the hedge through the arches upon the heath.

For the ordering of the ground within the great hedge, I leave it to variety of device, advising, nevertheless, that whatsoever form you cast it into first, it be not too busy,² or full of work : wherein I, for my part, do not like images cut out in juniper or other garden stuff—they be for children. Little low hedges, round like welts,³ with some pretty pyramids, I like well ; and in some places fair columns, upon frames of carpenters' work. I would also have the alleys spacious and fair. You may have closer alleys upon the side grounds, but none in the main garden. I wish, also, in the very middle, a fair mount, with three ascents and alleys, enough for four to walk abreast, which I would have to be perfect circles, without any bulwarks or embossments ;⁴ and the whole mount to be thirty feet high, and some fine banqueting-house, with some chimneys neatly cast, and without too much glass.

For fountains, they are a great beauty and refreshment ; but pools mar all, and make the garden unwholesome, and full of flies and frogs. Fountains I intend to be of two natures, the one that sprinkleth or spouteth water ; the other a fair receipt of water, of some thirty or forty feet square, but without any fish, or slime, or mud. For the first, the ornaments of images, gilt, or of marble, which are in use, do well ; but the main matter is so to convey the water as⁶ it never stay, either in the

¹ Let. *To hinder*. ' Ofttimes I purposed to come unto you, but was *let* hitherto.'—*Romans* i. 13.

² Busy (now only applied to the agent, and not to the subject). *Elaborate*.

³ Welts. *Edging ; border*. ' Certain scioli, or smatterers, may have some edging or trimming, of a scholar, a *welt* or so ; but no more.'—*Ben Jonson*.

⁴ Embossments. *Anything standing out from the rest*. ' It expresses the great embossment of the figure.'—*Addison*.

⁵ Receipt. *Receptacle ; place for receiving*. ' He saw Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom.'—*Mark* ii. 14.

⁶ As. *That*. See page 26.

bowls or in the cistern—that the water be never by rest discoloured, green or red, or the like, or gather any mossiness or putrefaction; besides that, it is to be cleansed every day by the hand—also some steps up to it, and some fine pavement about it, do well. As for the other kind of fountain, which we may call a bathing-pool, it may admit much curiosity¹ and beauty, wherewith we will not trouble ourselves: as, that the bottom be finely paved, and with images; the sides likewise; and withal embellished with coloured glass, and such things of lustre, encompassed also with fine rails of low statuas;² but the main point is the same which we mentioned in the former kind of fountain, which is, that the water be in perpetual motion, fed by a water higher than the pool, and delivered into it by fair spouts, and then discharged away under ground, by some equality of bores, that it stay little; and for fine devices, of arching water without spilling, and making it rise in several forms (of feathers, drinking glasses, canopies, and the like), they be pretty things to look on, but nothing to health and sweetness.

For the heath, which was the third part of our plot, I wished it to be framed, as much as may be, to a natural wildness. Trees I would have none in it, but some thickets made only of sweetbriar and honeysuckle, and some wild vines amongst, and the ground set with violets, strawberries, and primroses; for these are sweet, and prosper in the shade, and these are to be in the heath here and there, not in any order. I like also little heaps, in the nature of mole-hills (such as are in wild heaths), to be set, some with wild thyme, some with pinks, some with germander, that gives a good flower to the eye; some with periwinkle, some with violets, some with strawberries, some with cowslips, some with daisies, some with red roses, some with lilium convallium, some with sweet-williams red, some with bear's-foot, and the like low flowers, being withal sweet and sightly—part of which heaps to be with standards of little bushes pricked upon their top, and part without—the standards to be roses, juniper, holly, berberries (but here and there, because of the

¹ Curiosity. *Elegance.*

² 'Even at the base of Pompey's *statua*.'—Shakespeare, *Jul. Cæsar*.

smell of their blossom), red currants, gooseberries, rosemary, bays, sweetbriar, and such like ; but these standards to be kept with cutting, that they grow not out of course.

For the side grounds, you are to fill them with variety of alleys, private to give a full shade ; some of them wheresoever the sun be. You are to frame some of them likewise for shelter, that, when the wind blows sharp, you may walk as in a gallery ; and those alleys must be likewise hedged at both ends, to keep out the wind, and these closer alleys must be ever finely gravelled, and no grass, because of going wet. In many of these alleys, likewise, you are to set fruit-trees of all sorts, as well upon the walls as in ranges ; and this should be generally observed, that the borders wherein you plant your fruit-trees be fair, and large, and low, and not steep, and set with fine flowers, but thin and sparingly, lest they deceive¹ the trees. At the end of both the side grounds I would have a mount of some pretty height, leaving the wall of the enclosure breast-high, to look abroad into the fields.

For the main garden, I do not deny but there should be some fair alleys ranged on both sides with fruit-trees, and some pretty tufts of fruit-trees and arbours with seats, set in some decent order ; but these to be by no means set too thick, but to leave the main garden so as it be not close, but the air open and free. For as for shade, I would have you rest upon the alleys of the side grounds, there to walk, if you feel disposed, in the heat of the year or day ; but to make account, that the main garden is for the more temperate parts of the year, and, in the heat of summer, for the morning and the evening, or overcast days.

For aviaries, I like them not, except they be of that largeness as they may be turfed, and have living plants and bushes set in them, that the birds may have more scope and natural nestling, and that no foulness appear on the floor of the aviary. So I have made a platform of a princely garden, partly by precept, partly by drawing—not a model, but some general lines

¹ Deceive. *To deprive by stealth ; to rob.* ‘ And so deceive the spirits of the body, and rob them of their nourishment.’—*Bacon.* ‘ Rather than I would embezzle or deceive him of a mite, I would it were moulte, and put into my mouth.’—*Cavendish, Life of Cardinal Wolsey.*

of it—and in this I have spared¹ for no cost; but it is nothing for great princes, that, for the most part, taking advice with workmen, with no less cost set their things together, and sometimes add statues, and such things, for state and magnificence, but nothing to the true pleasure of a garden.

ANNOTATION.

'I for my part do not like images cut out in juniper.'

This childish taste, as Bacon rightly calls it, prevailed to a great degree long after his time. But what is now called 'Landscape-gardening' is, of all the fine arts (it may fairly be accounted one), the latest in its origin; having arisen not very early in the last century.

The earliest writer, I believe, on the subject was my uncle Thomas Whately. From his work (which went through several editions) subsequent writers have borrowed largely, and generally with little or no acknowledgment. The French poet De Lille, however, in his poem of *Les Jardins*, does acknowledge him as his master.

Mr. W. was distinguished as a man of taste in more than one department. Being by many looked up to with deference in such matters, it was he that first brought into notice Thomson's *Seasons*, and thus laid the foundation of its great popularity. And the portion that was completed of his work on the *Characters of Shakespere* (left unfinished at his death, but edited first by my father, and afterwards by myself) is considered by competent judges to be one of the ablest critical works that ever appeared.²

¹ Spare. *To restrict oneself; to forbear.*

'We might have spared our coming.'—Milton.

² This Work was very severely criticized in a pamphlet published a good many years ago, by Mr. John Kemble, which is something of a curiosity in its way; on account of the vehement indignation with which he comes forward to vindicate the character of Macbeth, which had been, as he thinks, unduly disparaged. If Shakespere's Macbeth had been a real person, and had been a dear friend of Mr. Kemble's, more wrathful zeal could hardly have been manifested. And the reckless haste of the writing appears in the circumstance that he had (with the book before him) mistaken the Author's christian name, and mis-spelt his surname. It is true, it is

His treatise on *Modern Gardening* (as it was then called) would form the most suitable annotation on this Essay of Bacon's. But it is far too long to be inserted entire; and any extracts or abridgment would be far from doing justice either to the Author, or to the subject.

It is worth observing, that of what is now called *picturesque* beauty, the ancients seem to have had no perception. A modern reader does indeed find in their writings descriptions which in *his* mind excite ideas of that kind of beauty. But the writers themselves seem to have felt delight only in the *refreshing* coolness of streams and shady trees,—in the *softness* of a grassy couch,—and in the gay *colours* and *odours* of flowers. And as for rocky mountains, and everything that *we* admire as sublime scenery, this they seem to have regarded merely with aversion and horror; as the generality of the uneducated do, now, and as our ancestors did, not many years ago. Cotton, for instance, the contemporary and friend of Isaac Walton, and an author of some repute in his day, speaks of his own residence on the romantic river Dove, which tourists now visit on account of its surpassing beauty, as

‘A place
Where Nature only suffers in disgrace.
Environ'd round with Nature's shames and ills,
Black heaths, wild crags, black rocks, and naked hills.’

And most even of Mr. Whately's contemporaries seem to have regarded the Scotch Highlands as frightful.

a matter of no intrinsic importance whether he was christened Thomas or William, or whether his surname was written with seven letters, or eight. But to make *two* blunders in the *title-page* of the book one is reviewing, indicates careless impetuosity.

ESSAY XLVII. OF NEGOTIATING.

IT is generally better to deal by speech than by letter, and by the mediation of a third than by a man's self. Letters are good, when a man would draw an answer by letter back again, or when it may serve for a man's justification afterwards to produce his own letter: or where it may be danger to be interrupted, or heard by pieces. To deal in person is good, when a man's face breedeth regard, as commonly with inferiors; or in tender cases, where a man's eye upon the countenance of him with whom he speaketh may give him a direction how far to go; and generally, where a man will reserve to himself liberty, either to disavow or expound. In choice of instruments, it is better to chuse men of a plainer sort, that are like to do that that is committed to them, and to report back again faithfully the success, than those that are cunning¹ to contrive out of other men's business somewhat to grace themselves, and will help the matter in report, for satisfaction sake. Use also such persons as affect² the business wherein they are employed; for that quickeneth much; and such as are fit for the matter, as bold men for expostulation, fair-spoken men for persuasion, crafty men for inquiry and observation, froward and absurd³ men for business that doth not well bear out itself. Use also such as have been lucky, and prevailed before in things wherein you have employed them; for that breeds confidence, and they will strive to maintain their prescription.

It is better to sound a person with whom one deals, afar off, than to fall upon the point at first, except you mean to surprise him by some short question. It is better dealing with men in appetite,⁴ than with those that are where they would be. If

¹ Cunning. *Skilful*. 'I will take away the *cunning* artificer.'—*Isaiah* iii. 3.

'I will send you a man of mine,
Cunning in music and the mathematics.'—*Shakespeare*.

² Affect. *To like*. See page 416.

³ Absurd. See Annotation on Essay XXVI.

⁴ Appetite. *Desire*.

'Dexterity so obeying *appetite*,
That what he wills, he does.'—*Shakespeare*

a man deal with another upon conditions, the start of first performance is all; which a man cannot reasonably demand, except either the nature of the thing be such which must go before; or else a man can persuade the other party that he shall still need him in some other thing; or else that he be counted the honestest man. All practice¹ is to discover, or to work. Men discover themselves in trust, in passion, at unawares; and of necessity, when they would have somewhat done, and cannot find an apt pretext. If you would work any man, you must either know his nature or fashions,² and so lead him; or his ends, and so persuade him; or his weakness and disadvantages, and so awe him; or those that have interest in him, and so govern him. In dealing with cunning persons, we must ever consider their ends to interpret their speeches; and it is good to say little to them, and that which they least look for. In all negotiations of difficulty, a man may not look to sow and reap at once, but must prepare business, and so ripen it by degrees.

ANNOTATIONS.

‘It is generally better to deal by speech than by letter.’

It is a pity Bacon did not say more, though what he does say is very just—on the comparative reasons for discussing each matter *orally*, or in *writing*. Not that a set of rules could be devised for the employment of each, that should supersede the need of cautious observation, and sagacious reflection; for ‘what art,’ as he himself has observed, ‘can teach the suit-

¹ Practice. *Negotiation; skilful management.* ‘He ought to have that by *practice*, which he could not by prayer.’—*Sidney*. Thus, also, the verb:

‘I have *practised* with him,
And found means to let the victor know,
That Syphax and Sempronius are his friends.’—*Addison*.

² Fashion. *Way; manner; habit.*

‘Pluck Casca by the sleeve,
And he will, after his own *fashion*, tell you
What hath proceeded.’—*Shakespeare*.

able employment of an art?' 'Genius begins,' as some one has remarked, 'where rules end.' But well-framed rules—such as Bacon doubtless could have given us in this matter—instead of cramping genius, enable it to act more efficiently.

One advantage which, in some cases, the speaker possesses over the writer is, that he can proceed exactly in the *order* which he judges to be the best; establishing each point in succession, and perhaps keeping out of sight the conclusion to which he is advancing, if it be one against which there exists a prejudice. For sometimes men will feel the force of strong arguments which they would not have listened to at all, if they had known at the outset to what they were ultimately leading. Thus the lawyer, in the fable, is drawn into giving a right decision as to the duty of the owner of an ox which had gored a neighbour's. Now, though you may proceed in the same order, in a letter or a book, you cannot—if it is all to be laid before the reader at once—prevent his looking first at the end, to see what your ultimate design is. And then you may be discomfited, just as a well-drawn-up army might be, if attacked in *the rere*.

Many writers of modern tales have guarded against this, and precluded their readers from forestalling the conclusion, by publishing in successive *numbers*. And an analogous advantage may sometimes be secured by writing two or more letters in succession, so as gradually to develop the arguments in their proper order.

In oral discussions, *quickness* may give a man a great advantage over those who may, perhaps, surpass him in sound judgment, but who take more time to form their opinions, and to develop their reasons; and, universally, speaking has an advantage over writing, when the arguments are plausible, but flimsy. There is a story of an Athenian, who had a speech written for him in a cause he was to plead, by a professional orator, and which he was to learn by heart. At the first reading, he was delighted with it; but less at the second; and at the third, it seemed to him quite worthless. He went to the composer to complain; who reminded him that the judges were only to *hear it once*.

And hence, as has been justly remarked, the very early practice of much public speaking, tends to cultivate, in the person

himself, a habit of readiness and fluency, at the expense of careful investigation and accurate reasoning.¹ A work requiring these qualities—such as, for instance, a sound treatise on Political Economy—‘might better be expected,’ says Lord Macaulay, ‘from an apothecary in a country town, or a minister in the Hebrides, than from a man who, from the age of twenty-one, had been a practised debater in public.’

For sound reasoning, on the other hand, when opposed to existing prejudices, writing has a corresponding advantage over speaking. Some plausible, though insufficient, objection to what has been urged, may at once start up, as soon as the argument meets the ear or the eye; and in an oral discussion this may seem to have finally disposed of the matter, and the whole may pass away from the mind. But written words remain, as it were, staring you in the face, and are virtually repeated over and over again each time of re-perusal. It must be a really satisfactory refutation that can set the mind quite at ease in this case. For this is the converse of the case of the speech above alluded to. Sound arguments appear stronger and stronger each time they are re-considered.

Oral discussion has this advantage in favour of the disingenuous and crafty—that something may be conveyed by the *tone* of voice, looks, and gestures, which cannot be accurately reported, or at least so as to be satisfactorily proved; and thus contempt, or suspicion, or incredulity, or disapprobation, &c., may be so conveyed as not to *commit* a man. And even words actually spoken may be denied; or some (alleged) explanation of them may be added; and it will be difficult to bring home to a man conclusively what he did, or did not, say; because few witnesses will be prepared to make oath as to the very words spoken. What is written, on the other hand, is a standing witness, and cannot be so easily explained away.

There is an advantage, again, in requiring of candidates for the Ministry a *written* subscription to certain *fixed* Formularies, in preference to the system alluded to in Annotation (1) to Essay III. It is true, indeed, that a man *may* explain away in ‘a non-natural sense’ what he has subscribed to; according to the principle avowed by a certain Party, and practised not only by

¹ *Oral* translation from a foreign language, it is remarked by Dr. Arnold, gives fluency of speech without carelessness of thought.

them, but by some of their opponents also. But it is plain that it must be much *more* easy to back out of what has passed in a mere oral discussion.

There is this difference again between speaking and writing; that there is no use in *saying* anything, however reasonable and forcible, which you are sure will have no weight with the persons you are speaking to. For there are persons whom to attempt to convince by even the strongest reasons, and most cogent arguments, is like King Lear putting a letter before a man without eyes, and saying, 'Mark but the penning of it!' to which he answers, 'Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.' But it may be well worth while sometimes to *write* to such a person much that is not likely to influence him at all, if you have an opportunity of showing it to *others*, as a proof that he *ought* to have been convinced by it.

As for speeches in public, they may be considered as partaking of both characters; for, as they are taken down by the reporters, and printed, they are, so far, of the character of written compositions.

Bacon remarks in his Essay 'On Cunning,' that when there are two persons only conferring together, it is impossible to make it clear which of them said what. If either of them is trying to *back out* of something he has said, or practising any other kind of craft, he will be likely to say, 'I understood you to say so and so;' or 'You misunderstood me. I did not say so and so.' And when both parties are honest, there will be sometimes a real misapprehension of what passed orally; which is so frequent a cause of quarrels, that the very word 'misunderstanding' has come to be used in that sense.

It is to be observed that when the expressions in dispute are not merely what lawyers call 'obiter dicta'—something hastily and incidentally thrown out,—but contain the very drift and general tenor of a full and leisurely discussion of some matter, it is much more likely—other things being equal—that A. should have forgotten what he said, than that B. should have imagined what never took place. Yet there are some persons who, without any disingenuous design, but merely from a groundless confidence in the infallibility of their own memory, will insist on it that another has totally mistaken the whole drift of their discourse, and that they

never said anything at all like what he distinctly remembers—though it is what he closely attended to—and what made a strong impression on his mind. In such a case, he might fairly reply, ‘Well, it cannot be denied to be *possible* that one man may mistake another, to any extent, and under any circumstances; but if this is the case with me, there is no use in your *speaking to me at all*, now, or at any time. For if I am unable to understand aright the general drift of a discussion, in plain English, and to which I paid the closest attention, how can I be sure that the sense I understand your words to convey at *this very moment*, may not be something quite as different from your real meaning, as that which I formerly understood you to say? There must be an end therefore of all oral conference between us. Anything that you wish to communicate, you must put down on paper, and let me, on reading it, express, on paper also, in my own words, what it is that I understand from it; and then, these must be shown to one or two other persons, who must declare whether I have rightly understood you or not; and must explain my mistake if I have made any.’

For people who are slippery, either from design or from treacherous memory, there is nothing like writing.

But it may be remarked generally, that a person who is apt to complain of ‘not being understood,’ even by such as possess ordinary intelligence and candour, is one who does not well understand himself.

A remark of Dr. Cooke Taylor, in *The Bishop*, bears upon this subject:—‘Much judgment is required to discriminate between the occasions when business can be best done personally, and when best by letter. One general rule may be noted:—disagreements will be best *prevented* by oral communications, for then each man may throw out what occurs to him, without being committed in writing to something from which he would be ashamed to draw back. There is room for mutual explanation—for softening down harsh expressions—for coming to an understanding about common objects, which very probably are not inconsistent so long as the elements of discord retain the vagueness of spoken words. *Litera scripta manet*.¹

¹ See Annotation on Essay III. p. 30.

‘When, however, disagreements *actually exist*, the opposite course must be pursued. In such a case conversation has an inevitable tendency to become debate; and in the heat of argument something is likely to be thrown out offensive to one side or the other. Adversaries generally meet, not to end a dispute, but to continue it; not to effect reconciliation, but to gain a victory; they are, therefore, likely to remember differently what is said, to put very varied interpretations on tones and looks, and to find fresh aliment of strife in the means employed for its termination. Even when adversaries meet for the express purpose of being reconciled, they are very apt to slide insensibly into the opposite course, and thus to widen the breach which you are anxious to have closed. It would be an odd way of preventing a fight between game cocks to bring them into the same pit.’

It is important to observe, that where there are a number of persons possessed with some strong prejudices which you wish to break down, you have a much better chance by dealing with them one by one, than together; because they keep each other in countenance in holding out against strong reasons to which they can find no answer; and are ashamed—each in presence of the rest—to go back from what they have said, and own conviction. But if you untie the faggot, you may break the sticks one by one.

And again, if you wish to make the most of your station and character, so as to overbear superior reasons on the other side, do not bring them together, lest some of them should press you with arguments or objections which you cannot answer, and the rest should be ashamed to decide, through mere deference to you, against what each feels must be the *general* conviction; but if you take them one by one, each will probably be ashamed of setting up himself singly against you; you will be likely to prevail at least with each one who cannot himself refute you; and these will probably be the majority.¹

¹ Some Reviewer, if I recollect rightly, takes for granted that I am here describing my own practice. On the same principle he would, one may suppose, if he heard of some anatomist, who had pointed out the situation of the vital parts of the human frame, where a wound was likely to prove mortal, conclude that the man *must be an assassin!*

It is not perhaps wonderful that a person of low moral principle should infer—judging from himself—that one who *knows* of some crafty trick will be sure to

But, on the other hand, if there are some prevailing prejudices that are on your side, and cool argument would weigh against you, then, according to what has been said just above, you can more easily manage a number of men together, than each singly.

It is told of the celebrated Wilkes, that at some public meeting he sat next to a person who, being ill-pleased with the course matters were taking, kept exclaiming, 'I cannot allow this to go on! I must take the *sense of the Meeting* on this point.' Whereupon Wilkes is said to have whispered to him, 'Do so, if you will; I'll take the *nonsense* of the Meeting against you, and beat you.'

Some persons have an excessive dread of following in the *wake* of another; wishing to be accounted the originators of any measure they advocate. In dealing with a man of this character, you must be ready (supposing you are more anxious to effect some good object, than to obtain the credit of it) to humour this kind of vanity, by allowing him to take the lead, and to fancy, if he insists on it, that the view he adopts was a suggestion of his own. Many a man's co-operation may be purchased at this price, who would have disdained the thought of favouring another person's scheme. You must be prepared, therefore, if you are acting with true singleness of purpose, to say, with the hero in the *Æneid*,

..... 'hæc dira meo dum vulnere pestis
Pulsa cadat, patriam remeabo inglorius urbem.'

In dealing with those who have prejudices to be got over, and whose co-operation or conviction you wish for, it is well worth remembering that there are two opposite kinds of disposition in men, requiring opposite treatment. One man, perhaps intelligent, and not destitute of candour, but with a considerable share of what phrenologists call the organs of *Firmness*, and of *Combateness*, will set himself to find objections to your proposals or views; and the more you urge him to come to an immediate decision on your side, and own himself overcome by your arguments, the more resolutely he will maintain his first position, and will at length commit himself irrecoverably to

practise it. But any one of even a moderate degree of acuteness, will perceive that a person who does practise such tricks, is not very likely to *publish a description* of them. Burglars do not send word to the master of a house at what point they design to break in.

opposition. Your wisest course, therefore, with such a man will be, after having laid before him your reasons, to recommend him to reflect calmly on them, and so leave him to consult his pillow. And it will often happen that he will reason himself into your views. Leave the *arrow sticking* in his prejudice, and it will gradually bleed to death.

With another man, of a very different character, it will be wise to pursue an opposite course. If you urge him with the strongest reasons, and answer all his objections, and then leave him apparently a convert, you will find the next time you meet him, that you have all to do over again; everything that you had said having faded away. Your only security with such a man, is to continue pressing him, till he has distinctly given his consent, or plainly declared his acquiescence;—till you have brought him, as it were, formally to pass the Act in the Parliament of his own mind, and to have thus *committed* himself in your favour.

Of course, you must watch for any symptoms that may indicate which kind of man you have to deal with.

It is worth remarking that a person who has been led by plausible *arguments* to adopt some erroneous notions, is not unlikely to be *reasoned* out of them: but *not so*, if he has adopted them from some *feeling*, fancy, or unreasoning prejudice, or under some half-mad delusion; or from the influence of strong passion, or of self-interest. In such a case, though he may bring forward what are meant for arguments to justify his conviction, it will be but lost labour to refute those arguments. He will bring forward others, no matter how futile; and when all are refuted, he will still adhere to his belief. It may be laid down as a general rule, with few or no exceptions, that *what did not come in by the door of Reason, will not be driven out at that door*.

A person under partial derangement, will often be haunted by a delusion which he half suspects to be such, but which he cannot completely shake off; like a troublesome Dream which we sometimes suspect to be but a dream, but are unable (especially in sickness) to get rid of. In such a case, if you attempt to *argue* the man out of his delusion, you will be the more likely to *confirm* him in it; because he will set himself earnestly to defend it. It will be better to try to draw off his attention

to some other subject; as poor Cowper's was, for a time, by his translation of Homer. And thus there will be a little chance of its spontaneously fading away from his mind altogether.

And the like holds good with respect to all convictions founded in such prejudices as I have just alluded to. If the man is left to himself, the passion may perhaps cool; the fanciful notion may as it were evaporate of itself; and on beginning to think rationally he may cure his own error himself. Small as the chance may be, of such a cure, there is, I conceive, no *other* chance. Your arguments only arouse pertinacious opposition; and, as Lady Macbeth says of her husband,

‘Question¹ enrages him; he grows worse and worse.’

Reason has no authority except *over her own children*.

Another caution to be observed is, that in combating, whether as a speaker or a writer, deep-rooted prejudices, and maintaining unpopular truths, the point to be aimed at should be, to adduce what is sufficient, and *not much more* than is sufficient to prove your conclusion. If you can but satisfy men that your opinion is decidedly more probable than the opposite, you will have carried your point more effectually than if you go on, much beyond this, to demonstrate, by a multitude of the most forcible arguments, the *extreme absurdity* of thinking differently, till you have affronted the self-esteem of some, and awakened the distrust of others. ‘Some will be stung by a feeling of shame passing off into resentment, which stops their ears against argument. They could have borne perhaps to change their opinion: but not, *so* to change it as to tax their former opinion with the grossest folly. They would be so *sorry* to *think* they had been blinded to such an excess, and are so angry with him who is endeavouring to persuade them to think so, that these feelings determine them *not* to think it. They try (and it is an attempt which few persons ever make in vain) to shut their eyes against an humiliating conviction: and thus, the very triumphant force of the reasoning adduced, serves to harden them against admitting the conclusion: much as one

¹ Question. *Discussion*.

may conceive Roman soldiers desperately holding out an untenable fortress to the last extremity, from apprehension of being made to pass *under the yoke* by the victors, should they surrender.

‘Others again, perhaps comparatively strangers to the question, and not prejudiced, or not strongly prejudiced, against your conclusion, but ready to admit it if supported by sufficient arguments, will sometimes, if your arguments are *very much beyond* what is sufficient, have their suspicions roused by this very circumstance. ‘Can it be possible,’ they will say, ‘that a conclusion so very obvious as this is made to appear, should not have been admitted long ago? Is it conceivable that such and such eminent philosophers, divines, statesmen, &c., should have been all their lives under delusions so gross?’ Hence they are apt to infer, either that the author has mistaken the opinions of those he imagines opposed to him, or else, that there is some subtle fallacy in his arguments.’¹

This is a distrust that reminds one of the story related by a French writer, M. Say, of some one who, for a wager, stood a whole day on one of the bridges in Paris, offering to sell a five-franc piece for one franc, and (naturally) not finding a purchaser. In this way the very clearness and force of the demonstration will, with some minds, have an opposite tendency to the one desired. Labourers who are employed in *driving wedges* into a block of wood, are careful to use blows of no greater force than is just sufficient. If they strike too hard, the elasticity of the wood will *throw out the wedge*.

It may be noticed here that the effect produced by any writing or speech of an argumentative character, on any subjects on which diversity of opinion prevails, may be compared—supposing the argument to be of any weight—to the effects of a fire-engine on a conflagration. That portion of the water which falls on solid stone walls, is poured out where it is not needed. That, again, which falls on blazing beams and rafters, is cast off in volumes of hissing steam, and will seldom avail to quench the fire. But that which is poured on wood-work that is just beginning to kindle, may stop the burning; and that which wets the rafters not yet ignited, but in danger, may save them

¹ *Elements of Rhetoric*, Part I. ch. iii.

from catching fire. Even so, those who already concur with the writer as to some point, will feel gratified with, and perhaps bestow high commendation on an able defence of the opinions they already held; and those, again, who have fully made up their minds on the opposite side, are more likely to be displeased than to be convinced. But both of these parties are left nearly in the same mind as before. Those, however, who are in a hesitating and doubtful state, may very likely be decided by forcible arguments. And those who have not hitherto considered the subject, may be induced to adopt opinions which they find supported by the strongest reasons. But the readiest and warmest approbation a writer meets with, will usually be from those whom he has *not* convinced, because they were convinced already. And the effect the most important and the most difficult to be produced, he will usually, when he does produce it, hear the least of. Those whom he may have induced to reconsider, and gradually to alter, previously fixed opinions, are not likely, for a time at least, to be very forward in proclaiming the change.

It is worth observing however that as a stream of water will sometimes a little *allay* the fierceness of a flame which it cannot extinguish, so, very forcible reasons even when they fail to convince some who have resolutely made up their minds, will sometimes a little mitigate their violence, when they come to reflect that it is at least evident there is *something* to be said on both sides.

One of the most troublesome kinds of person to deal with, in any kind of negotiation, is a *caviller*. Of these, some are such from insidious design, and some from intellectual deficiency. A caviller is on the look-out for objections, valid or invalid, to everything that is proposed, or done, or said; and will seldom fail to find some. No power, no liberty, can be entrusted to any one, which may not, possibly or conceivably, be abused; and the caviller takes for granted that it always *will* be abused;—that everything that is left to any one's discretion, must be left to his *indiscretion*;—and that, in short, no one will ever be restrained from doing *any* thing that he *may* do, by a sense of honour, or by common prudence, or by regard for character.

It would be easy for such a man to prove *à priori*, that it is

impossible for such a system as the British Constitution to work well, or to continue to subsist at all. The King may put his veto on a Bill which has passed both Houses; and when this is done, the Public will refuse supplies; and so, the government must come to a dead lock. Or, the King may create a great batch of Peers, and bribe a majority of the Commons, and so make himself absolute. Or again, the King may pardon *all* criminals, and thus nullify the administration of justice. Or again, he may appoint to all the Bishopricks, and to a great number of Livings, men of Socinian or Romish tendencies, who will explain away all our formularies, and wholly subvert the system of our Church.

The institution of an Order of persons called Parochial Visitors, having the office of assisting and acting under the Minister of each parish, and serving as a medium of communication between him and the parishioners, and standing in a relation to each, analogous to that of the attendants in an hospital towards the physician and the patients—this has been assailed in a similar way by cavillers. ‘Are these Visitors,’ it was said, ‘to have the cure of souls? Are they to expound Scripture to the people, and give them religious instruction and admonitions, just as the pastor does? If so, they ought to be regularly ordained clergymen; and should be called curates. Or, are they merely to be the bearers of communications between the people and the pastor, and not to venture, without his express orders, to read a passage of Scripture to a sick man, or to explain to him the meaning of such words as ‘Publican’ or ‘Pharisee?’ In that case they will fall into contempt as triflers.’

If you answer that they are not to be so rigidly restricted as that; but are to reserve for the Minister any important or difficult points; the caviller will reply—‘And who is to be *the judge* what *are* the most important and difficult points, and what the easier and more obvious. If this is to be left to the discretion of the Visitor himself, he will take everything into his own hands; but if it is to be referred to the Minister, then, the Visitor will be nothing but a mere messenger.’ In like manner it might be asked, whether the nurse in an hospital is to administer or withhold medicines, and perform surgical operations, at discretion, and, in short, to usurp all the functions of the physician, or whether she is not to be allowed to smooth a

patient's pillow, or moisten his lips, or wipe his brow, without a written order from the doctor.

The Israelites in the Wilderness were perverse enough, no doubt; but if there had been *cavillers* among them, it would have been easy to find plausible objections to the appointment by Moses of the seventy Elders, who were to decide all small matters, and to reserve the weightier ones for him. 'Who is to be the judge,' it might have been said, 'which *are* the weightier causes? If, the Elders themselves, then they may keep *all* matters in their own hands, and leave no jurisdiction at all in Moses: but if *he* is to be consulted on each point, he will not be saved any trouble at all; because every case will have to be laid before him.'

Nevertheless the plan did seem on the whole to work well; and so it was found, in practice, with the institution of Parochial Visitors; and so, with the British Constitution.

One course generally adopted by the caviller, with respect to any proposal that is brought forward, is, if it be made in *general* terms, to call for *detailed particulars*, and to say, 'explain distinctly what kind of regulations you wish for, and what are the changes you think needful, and who are the persons to whom you would entrust the management of the matter,' &c. If again, any of these details are given, it will be easy to find some plausible objection to one or more of these, and to join issue on that point, as involving the whole question. Sancho Panza's Baratarian physician did not at once lay down the decision that his patient was to have no dinner at all; but only objected to each separate dish to which he was disposed to help himself.

The only way to meet a caviller is to expose the whole system of cavilling, and say, 'If I had proposed so and so, you would have had your cavil ready; just as you have now.'

But in proposing any scheme, the best way is, to guard, in the first instance, against cavils on *details*, and establish, first that *some* thing of such and such a character is desirable; then proceeding to settle each of the particular points of detail, one by one. And this is the ordinary course of experienced men; who, as it were, cut a measure into mouthfuls, that it may be the more readily swallowed; dividing the whole measure into a series of resolutions; each of which will perhaps pass by a large majority, though the whole at once, if proposed at once as a

whole, might have been rejected. For, supposing it to consist of four clauses, A, B, C, and D, if out of an assembly of one hundred persons, twenty are opposed to clause A, and eighty in favour of it, and twenty others are opposed to clause B, which is supported by all the rest, and the like with C, and D, then, if the whole were put to the vote at once, there would be a strong majority against it: whereas, if divided, there would be that majority in favour of it.

It is fairly to be required, however, that a man should really *have*—though he may not think it wise to *produce* it in the first instance—some definite plan for carrying into effect whatever he proposes. Else, he may be one of another class of persons as difficult to negotiate with, and as likely to baffle any measure, as the preceding. There are some, and not a few, who cast scorn on any sober practical scheme by drawing bright pictures of a Utopia which can never be realized; either from their having more of imagination than judgment, or from a deliberate design to put one out of conceit with everything that is practicable, in order that nothing may be done.

E. g. ‘*What is wanted*, is, not this and that improvement in the mode of electing Members of Parliament,—but a Parliament consisting of truly honest, enlightened, and patriotic men. It is vain to talk of any system of Church-government, or of improved Church-discipline, or any alterations in our Services, or revision of the Bible-translation; *what we want* is a zealous and truly evangelical ministry, who shall assiduously inculcate on all the People pure Gospel-doctrine. It is vain to cast cannon and to raise troops; *what is wanted*, for the successful conduct of the war, is a large army of well-equipped and well-disciplined men, under the command of generals who are thoroughly masters of the art of war,’ &c. And thus one may, in every department of life, go on indefinitely making fine speeches that can lead to no practical result, except to create a disgust for everything that *is* practical.

When (in 1832) public attention was called to the enormous mischiefs arising from the system of Transportation, we were told in reply, in a style of florid and indignant declamation, that the real cause of all the enormities complained of, was, a ‘want of sufficient *fear of God*; (!) and that the only remedy wanted was, an increased fear of God!’ As if, when the unhealthiness

of some locality had been pointed out, and a suggestion had been thrown out for providing sewers, and draining marshes, it had been replied that the root of the evil was, a prevailing *want of health*;—that it was strange, this—the true cause—should have been overlooked;—and that the remedy of all would be to provide restored health!

As for the penal colonies, all that is required to make them efficient, is, we must suppose, to bring in a Bill enacting that ‘Whereas, &c., be it therefore enacted, that from and after the first of January next ensuing, all persons shall fear God!’¹

It is such Utopian declaimers that give plausibility to the objections of the cavillers above noticed.

It is but fair, after one has admitted (supposing it is what ought to be admitted) the desirableness of the end proposed, to call on the other party to say whether he knows, or can think of, any *means* by which that end can be attained.

‘In dealing with cunning persons, we must ever consider their ends.’

It is a most important caution, never to allow yourself to be *entrapped into a confidence*. A person will perhaps tell you the particulars of some delicate and important matter, and, at the end, will say ‘of course you will *not mention* to any one what I have been saying. I trust to your honour not to violate the confidence reposed in you.’ And if you then give a hasty assent (as the young and unwary are not unlikely to do) you are thenceforward bound by an engagement which perhaps will prove a very troublesome one. The prudent course will be, to reply, ‘I have made no promise of secrecy, nor will I make any. If you wished to impart a secret, you should have told me so at the outset; and I should then have considered maturely whether it were advisable to take on me the office of a Father-Confessor. As it is, I am free to use my own discretion. I do not say that I will, or that I will not, divulge what you have told me. I will act as I may see occasion. But I will not submit to have a confidence *forced* on me.’

¹ See *Letters to Earl Grey*; and also *Lectures on Political Economy*.

ESSAY XLVIII. OF FOLLOWERS AND FRIENDS.

COSTLY followers are not to be liked, lest, while a man maketh his train longer, he make his wings shorter. I reckon to be costly, not them alone which charge the purse, but which are wearisome and importune¹ in suits. Ordinary followers ought to challenge no higher conditions than countenance, recommendation, and protection from wrongs. Faction followers are worse to be liked, which follow not upon² affection to him with whom they range themselves, but upon discontentment³ conceived against some other; whereupon commonly ensueth that ill intelligence⁴ that we many times see between great personages. Likewise glorious⁵ followers, who make themselves as trumpets of the commendation of those they follow, are full of inconvenience; for they taint business through want of secrecy; and they export honour from a man, and make him a return in envy. There is a kind of followers, likewise, which are dangerous, being indeed espials,⁶ which inquire the secrets of the house, and bear tales of them to others; yet such men many times are in great favour, for they are officious,⁷ and commonly exchange tales. The following by certain estates⁸ of

¹ Importune. *Importunate.*

² More shall thy penitent sighs, his endlesse mercy please;
Than their *importune* suits which dreame that wordes God's wrathe appease.'
—*Surrey.*

² Upon. *In consequence of.* 'Upon pity they were taken away; upon ignorance they were again demanded.'—*Hayward.*

³ Discontentment. *Discontent.* 'Tell of your enemies, and *discontentments.*'—*State Trials*, 1600.

⁴ Ill intelligence. *Bad terms.* 'He lived rather in a fair *intelligence*, than in any friendship with the favourites.'—*Clarendon.*

⁵ Glorious. *Boastful.*

'We have not
Received into our bosom, and our grace,
A *glorious* lazy drone.'—*Massinger.*

⁶ Espials. *Spials; spies.*

⁷ Officious. *Useful; doing good offices.*

'Yet, not to earth are those bright luminaries
Officious; but to thee, earth's habitant.'—*Milton.*

⁸ Estates of men. *Orders of men.* See page 215.

men, answerable to that which a great man himself professeth (as of soldiers to him that hath been employed in the wars, and the like), hath ever been a thing civil,¹ and well taken even in monarchies, so it be without too much pomp or popularity: but the most honourable kind of following is to be followed as one that apprehendeth² to advance virtue and desert in all sorts of persons; and yet, where there is no eminent odds in sufficiency,³ it is better to take with the more passable than with the more able: and, besides, to speak truth, in base times active men are of more use than virtuous. It is true, that in government it is good to use men of one rank equally: for to countenance some extraordinarily is to make them insolent, and the rest discontent,⁴ because they may claim a due; but contrariwise in favour, to use men with much difference⁵ and election, is good; for it maketh the persons preferred more thankful, and the rest more officious; because all is of favour. It is good discretion not to make too much of any man at the first, because one cannot hold out that proportion. To be governed (as we call it) by one, is not safe, for it shows softness,⁶ and gives a freedom to scandal and disreputation;⁷ for those that would not censure or speak ill of a man immediately, will talk more boldly of those that are so great with them, and thereby wound their honour; yet to be distracted with many, is worse, for it makes men to be of the last impression, and full of change. To take advice

¹ Civil. *Decorous.*

‘Where *civil* speech and soft persuasion hung.’—*Pope.*

² Apprehend. *To conceive; to take in as an object.*

‘Can we want obedience, then,
To Him, or possibly his love desert,
Who formed us from the dust, and placed us here,
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek, or *apprehend.*’—*Milton.*

³ Sufficiency. *Ability.* See page 291.

⁴ Discontent. *Discontented.* ‘The discountenanced and *discontent*, these the Earl singles out, as best for his purpose.’—*Hayward.*

⁵ Difference. *Distinction.* ‘Our constitution does not only make a *difference* between the guilty and the innocent, but even among the guilty, between such as are more or less observed.’—*Addison.*

⁶ Softness. *Weakness.*

‘Under a shepherd *soft* and negligent,
The wolfe hath many a sheep and lambe to rent.’—*Chaucer.*

⁷ Disreputation. *Disrepute.* ‘Gluttony is not in such *disreputation* among men as drunkenness.’—*Bishop Taylor.*

of some few friends, is ever honourable; for lookers-on many times see more than gamesters; and the vale best discovereth the hill. There is little friendship in the world, and least of all between equals, which was wont¹ to be magnified. That that is, is between superior and inferior, whose fortunes may comprehend the one the other.

ANNOTATIONS.

‘*They taint business through want of secrecy.*’

Henry Taylor, in the *Statesman*, has a good remark on the advantage of trusting *thoroughly* rather than *partially*. For there are some who will be more likely to betray *one* secret, if one only is confided, than if they felt themselves confidants altogether. They will then, he thinks, be less likely to give a boastful proof of the confidence reposed in them, by betraying it.

‘*A kind of followers which bear tales.*’

It is observable that flatterers are usually tale-bearers. Thus we have in *Proverbs* the caution, ‘He that goeth about as a tale-bearer, revealeth secrets; therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.’

‘*Lookers-on many times see more than gamesters.*’

This proverbial maxim, which bears witness to the advantage sometimes possessed by an observant by-stander over those actually engaged in any transaction, has a parallel in an Irish proverb:

Ír mairé an t-íomhán; de an te bíor ar an gcloí de.

He is a good hurler that's on the ditch.²

¹ Wont. *Accustomed*. See page 459.

² In Ireland, a *bank* is so called.

‘To countenance some extraordinarily is to make them insolent.’

Men very often raise up some troublesome persons into importance, and afterwards try in vain to get rid of them. So also, they give encouragement to some dangerous principle or practice, in order to serve a present purpose, and then find it turned against themselves. The horse in the fable, who seeking aid against his enemy, the stag, had allowed an insidious ally to mount, and to put his bit into his mouth, found it afterwards no easy matter to unseat him. Thus, too, according to the proverb, the little birds, which are chasing about the full-grown cuckoo, had themselves reared it as a nestling.

‘The Spring was come, and the nest was made,
And the little bird all her eggs had laid,
When a cuckoo came to the door to beg
She would kindly adopt another egg;
For I have not leisure, upon my word,
To attend to such things, said the roving bird.
There was hardly room for them all in the nest,
But the egg was admitted along with the rest;
And the foster-birds played their part so well,
That soon the young cuckoo had chipped the shell:
For the silly birds! they could not see
That their foster-chick their plague would be;
And so big and saucy the cuckoo grew,
That no peace at last in the nest they knew.
He peck’d and he hustled the old birds about;
And as for the young ones, he jostled them out.
Till at length they summoned their friends to their aid,
Wren, robin, and sparrow, not one delay’d,
And joining together, neighbour with neighbour,
They drove out the cuckoo with infinite labour.
But the cuckoo was fledged, and laughed to see
How they vainly chased him from tree to tree:
They had nursed him so well, he was grown the stronger,
And now he needed their help no longer.

Give place, or power, or trust, to none
Who will make an ill use of what they have won.
For when you have rear'd the cuckoo-guest,
'Twill be hard to drive him out of the nest ;
And harder still, when away he's flown,
To hunt down the cuckoo now fully grown.¹

¹ From a periodical called *The True Briton*.

ESSAY XLIX. OF SUITORS.

MANY ill matters and projects are undertaken ; and private suits do putrefy the public good. Many good matters are undertaken with bad minds—I mean not only corrupt minds, but crafty minds, that intend not performance. Some embrace suits which never mean to deal effectually in them ; but if they see there may be life in the matter, by some other mean,¹ they will be content to win a thank,² or take a second³ reward, or, at least, to make use in the meantime of the suitor's hopes. Some take hold of suits only for an occasion to cross some other, or to make⁴ an information, whereof they could not otherwise have apt pretext, without care what become of the suit when the turn is served ; or, generally, to make other men's business a kind of entertainment⁵ to bring in their own ; nay, some undertake suits with a full purpose to let them fall, to the end to gratify the adverse party, or competitor. Surely there is in some sort a right in every suit : either a right of equity, if it be a suit of controversy, or a right of desert, if it be a suit of petition. If affection lead a man to favour the wrong side in justice, let him rather use his countenance to compound the matter than to carry it. If affection lead a man to favour the less worthy in desert, let him do it without depraving⁶ or disabling the better deserver. In suits which a man doth not well understand, it is good to refer them to some friend of trust

¹ Mean. *Means*. See page 213.

² A thank. *Seldom used in the singular*. 'The fool saith I have no thank for all my good deed ; and they that eat my bread speak evil of me.'—*Ecclus.* xx. 16.

³ Second. *Secondary ; inferior*.

' Each glance, each grace,
Keep their first lustre and maintain their place,
Not second yet to any other face.'—*Dryden*.

⁴ Make. *Give*. 'They all with one consent began to make excuse.'—*Luke* xiv. 18.

⁵ Entertainment. *Preliminary communication*. 'The queen desires you to use some gentle *entertainment* to Laertes, before you fall to play.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁶ Deprave. *To vilify*. 'And that knoweth conscience, ich cam nogt to chide, ne to *deprave* the persone.'—*Piers Ploughman*. 'Envy is blind, and can do nothing but *deprave* and speak ill of virtuous doing.'—*Bennett*.

and judgment, that may report whether he may deal in them with honour; but let him chuse well his referendaries,¹ for else he may be led by the nose. Suitors are so distasted² with delays and abuses,³ that plain dealing in denying to deal in suits at first, and reporting the success barely, and in challenging no more thanks than one hath deserved, is grown not only honourable, but also gracious. In suits of favour, the first coming ought to take little place;⁴ so far forth⁵ consideration may be had of his trust, that if intelligence of the matter could not otherwise have been had but by him, advantage be not taken of the note,⁶ but the party left to his other means, and in some sort recompensed for his discovery. To be ignorant of the value of a suit is simplicity, as well as to be ignorant of the right thereof is want of conscience. Secrecy in suits is a great mean of obtaining; for voicing⁷ them to be in forwardness may discourage some kind of suitors, but doth quicken⁸ and awake others; but timing of the suit is the principal—timing, I say, not only in respect of the person who should grant it, but in respect of those which are like to cross it. Let a man, in the choice of his mean,⁹ rather chuse the fittest mean than the greatest mean; and rather them that deal in certain things,

¹ Referendaries. *Referees*. 'Who was legate at the dooings, who was *referendarie*, who was presidente, who was presente.'—*Bishop Jewell*.

² Distaste. *To disgust*. 'These new edicts, that so *distaste* the people.'—*Heywood*.

³ Abuses. *Deception*.

'Lend me your kind pains to find out this *abuse*.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁴ Place. *Effect*.

'Yet these fixed evils sit so fit in him,
That they take *place*, when virtue's steely bones
Look bleak in the cold wind.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁵ So far forth. *To the degree*. 'The substance of the service of God, *so far forth* as it hath in it anything more than the love of reason doth teach, must not be invented of man, but received from God himself.'—*Hooker*.

'Arraied for this feste, in every wise
So far forth as his connyng may suffice.'—*Chaucer*.

⁶ Note. *Notification; information*.

'She that from Naples
Can have no *note*, unless the sun were past,
(The man i' the moon's too slow.)'—*Shakespeare*.

⁷ Voice. *To report*. 'It was *voiced* that the king proposed to put to death Edward Plantagenet.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁸ Quicken. *To bring to life*. See page 441.

⁹ Mean. *Instrument*. 'Pamela's noble heart would needs gratefully make known the valiant *mean* of her safety.'—*Sidney*.

than those that are general. The reparation of a denial is sometimes equal to the first grant, if a man show himself neither dejected nor discontented. 'Iniquum petas, ut æquum feras'¹ is a good rule where a man hath strength of favour; but otherwise, a man were better rise in his suit, for he that would have ventured at first to have lost² the suitor, will not, in the conclusion, lose both the suitor and his own former favour.

Nothing is thought so easy a request to a great person, as his letter; and yet, if it be not in a good cause, it is so much out of his reputation. There are no worse instruments than these general contrivers of suits, for they are but a kind of poison and infection to public proceedings.

ANNOTATION.

'If it be not in a good cause, it is so much out of his reputation.'

To this very just and important remark Bacon might have added, that even in 'a good cause,' a *recommendation* of any one is likely to be regarded as a *favour* asked, for which a return will be expected. Nor is this, perhaps, altogether unreasonable. For, a Minister of State, for instance, may say, 'if we had wanted your advice for our *own* sake, we should have *consulted* you; but if you offer a suggestion *unasked*, our complying with it must be reckoned a kindness done to you, for which we may expect a return.' And one who has laid himself under an obligation to a Minister, if he is afterwards asked to vote, or to dispense patronage, contrary to his own judgment, must feel it very awkward either to comply or to refuse.

The best course, in general is, to write a letter to the *person himself* whose views you would promote, expressing your opinion of him, with liberty to show the letter, and to make reference to you for character.

¹ 'Ask for what is unjust, in order that thou mayest obtain what is just.'

² Lost. Ruined.

'Therefore mark my counsel
 or both yourself and me
 Cry, *lost*.'—*Shakespeare*.

ESSAY L. OF STUDIES.

STUDIES serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness¹ and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business. For, expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies, is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make² judgment wholly by their rules, is the humour of a scholar; they perfect nature, and are perfected by experience—for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them, for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation.

Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously;³ and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would⁴ be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are, like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man; and, therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had

¹ Privateness. *Privacy*. See page 115. ² Make. *Give*. See page 495.

³ Curiously. *Attentively*. 'At first I thought there had been no light reflected from the water; but observing it more *curiously*, I saw within it several spots, which appeared darker than the rest.'—*Sir Isaac Newton*.

⁴ Would. *Should*. See page 352.

need have a present wit ; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that¹ he doth not.

Histories make men wise ; poets witty ; the mathematics subtle ; natural philosophy deep ; moral, grave ; logic and rhetoric, able to contend : ‘ Abeunt studia in mores’²—nay, there is no stond³ or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought⁴ out by fit studies, like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises—bowling is good for the stone and reins,⁵ shooting for the lungs and breast, gentle walking for the stomach, riding for the head, and the like. So, if a man’s wits be wandering, let him study the mathematics ; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again ; if his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences,⁶ let him study the schoolmen, for they are ‘ cymini sectores ;’⁷ if he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call upon one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers’ cases—so every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

ANTITHETA ON STUDIES.

PRO.

‘ Lectio est conversatio cum prudentibus ; actio fere cum stultis.

‘ In reading, we hold converse with the wise ; in the business of life, generally with the foolish.’

‘ Non inutiles scientiæ existimandæ sunt, quarum in se nullus est usus, si ingenia acuant, et ordinent.

‘ We should not consider even those sciences which have no actual practical application in themselves, as without value, if they sharpen and train the intellect.’

CONTRA.

‘ Quæ unquam ars docuit tempestivum artis usum ?

‘ What art has ever taught us the suitable use of an art ?’

Artis sæpissime ineptus usus est, ne sit nullus.

‘ A branch of knowledge is often put to an improper use, for fear of its being idle.’

¹ That. *What.* See page 82.

² ‘ Moral habits are influenced by studies.’

³ Stond. *Hindrances.* See page 434.

⁴ Wrought. *Worked.* ‘ Who, through faith, wrought righteousness.’—*Heb.* xi.

⁵ 33. ‘ How great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee !’—*Psalm xxxi.* 19.

⁶ Reins. *Kidneys ; inward parts.* ‘ Whom I shall see for myself, though my reins be consumed within me.’—*Job xix.* 27.

⁷ Differences. *Distinctions.* See page 491.

⁸ ‘ Splitters of cummin.’

ANNOTATIONS.

'Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability.'

We should, then, cultivate, not only the corn-fields of our minds, but the pleasure-grounds also. Every faculty and every study, however worthless they may be, when not employed in the service of God,—however debased and polluted when devoted to the service of sin,—become ennobled and sanctified, when directed, by one whose constraining motive is the love of Christ, towards a good object. Let not the Christian then think 'scorn of the pleasant land.' That land is the field of ancient and modern literature—of philosophy, in almost all its departments—of the arts of reasoning and persuasion. Every part of it may be cultivated with advantage, as the Land of Canaan when bestowed upon God's peculiar People. They were not commanded to let it lie waste, as incurably polluted by the abominations of its first inhabitants; but to cultivate it, and dwell in it, living in obedience to the divine laws, and dedicating its choicest fruits to the Lord their God.

'Crafty men condemn studies.'

It is not unlikely that by the 'crafty' (in the Latin 'calidi') Bacon meant not exactly what the word now denotes, but—in agreement with the ancient use of the word 'craft,' for an occupation¹—what we commonly call *practical men*;—those expert in the details of business, and exclusively conversant in these. Some such men resemble a clock with a *minute-hand* but no hour-hand. These are apt to take for granted that a student, and especially an author, must be unfit for business. And the vulgar sometimes go further, and are disposed to give a man credit for practical sagacity, merely on account of his being illiterate.

It is worth observing that some of those who disparage some branch of study in which they are deficient, will often affect more contempt for it than they really feel. And not unfre-

¹ See *Acts* xix. 25-27.

quently they will take pains to have it thought that they are themselves well versed in it, or that they easily might be, if they thought it worth while;—in short, that it is not from hanging too high that the grapes are called sour.

Thus, Swift, in the person of Gulliver, represents himself, while deriding the extravagant passion for Mathematics among the Laputans, as being a good mathematician. Yet he betrays his utter ignorance, by speaking of ‘a pudding in the form of a cycloid :’ evidently taking a cycloid for a *figure*, instead of a *line*. This may help to explain the difficulty he is said to have had in obtaining his Degree.

Lord Chesterfield, again, when writing to his son in disparagement of classical studies, gives him to understand that he is himself quite at home in the classics. But when he proceeds to criticise Homer for celebrating the courage of Achilles, who could show none, being *invulnerable*, he betrays his having never read even a translation of the *Iliad*. For not only does Homer make no mention of his hero’s being invulnerable, but he even represents him as receiving a wound; and a great part of the poem turns on his being detained from the fight for want of his armour.

The contempt of studies, whether of crafty men or narrow-minded men, often finds its expression in the word ‘smattering;’ and the couplet is become almost a proverb,

‘A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.’

But the poet’s remedies for the dangers of a little learning are both of them impossible. None can ‘drink deep’ enough to be, in truth, anything more than very superficial; and every human Being, that is not a downright idiot, must *taste*.

It is plainly impossible that any man should acquire a knowledge of all that is to be known, on *all* subjects. But is it then meant that, on each particular subject on which he does learn anything at all, he should be perfectly well informed? Here it may fairly be asked, what is the ‘well?’—how much knowledge is to be called ‘little’ or ‘much?’ For, in many departments, the very utmost that had been acquired by the greatest proficients, a century and a half back, falls short of what is familiar to many a boarding-school miss now. And it is likely that our

posterity, a century and a half hence, will in many things be just as much in advance of us. And in most subjects, the utmost knowledge that any man can attain to, is but 'a little learning' in comparison of what he remains ignorant of. The view resembles that of an American forest, in which the more trees a man cuts down, the greater is the expanse of wood he sees around him.

But supposing you define the 'much' and the 'little' with reference to the existing state of knowledge in the present age and country, would any one seriously advise that those who are not proficient in astronomy should remain ignorant whether the earth moves, or the sun?—that unless you are complete master of agriculture, as far as it is at present understood, there is no good in your knowing wheat from barley?—that unless you are such a Grecian as Porson, you had better not learn to construe the Greek Testament?

The other recommendation of the poet, 'taste not'—that is to say, have no learning,—is equally impossible. The truth is, everybody has, and everybody ought to have, a slight and superficial knowledge—a 'smattering,' if you will—of more subjects than it is possible for the most diligent student to acquire thoroughly. It is very possible, and also very useful, to have that slight smattering of chemistry which will enable one to distinguish from the salts used in medicine, the oxalic acid, with which, through mistake, several persons have been poisoned. Again, without being an eminent botanist, a person may know—what it is most important to know—the difference between cherries and the berries of the deadly nightshade; the want of which knowledge has cost many lives.

Again, there is no one, even of those who are not profound politicians, who is not aware that we have Rulers; and is it not proper that he should understand that government is necessary to preserve our lives and property? Is he likely to be a worse subject for knowing that? That depends very much on the kind of government you wish to establish. If you wish to establish an unjust and despotic government—or, if you wish to set up a false religion—then it would be advisable to avoid the danger of enlightening the people. But if you wish to maintain a good government, the more the people understand the advantages of such a government, the more they will respect

it; and the more they know of true religion, the more they will value it.

There is nothing more general among uneducated people than a disposition to *socialism*; and yet nothing is more injurious to their own welfare. An equalization of wages would be most injurious to themselves; for it would, at once, destroy all emulation. All motives for the acquisition of skill, and for superior industry, would be removed. Now, it is but a *little* knowledge of political economy that is needed for the removal of this error; but that little is highly useful.

Again, every one knows, no matter how ignorant of medicine, that there is such a thing as disease. But as an instance of the impossibility of the 'taste not' recommendation of the poet, a fact may be mentioned, which is known to most. When the cholera broke out in Poland, the peasantry of that country took it into their heads that the nobles were poisoning them, in order to clear the country of them; they believed the rich to be the authors of that terrible disease; and the consequence was that the peasantry rose in masses, broke into the houses of the nobility, and finding some chloride of lime, which had been used for the purpose of disinfecting, they took it for the poison which had caused the disease; and they murdered them. Now, that was the sort of 'little learning' which was very dangerous.

Again, we cannot prevent people from believing that there is some superhuman Being who has regard to human affairs. Some clowns in the Weald of Kent, who had been kept as much as possible on the 'taste not' system,—left in a state of gross ignorance,—yet believed that the Deity did impart special powers to certain men: and that belief, coupled with excessive stupidity, led them to take an insane fanatic for a prophet. In this case, this 'little learning' actually caused an insurrection in his favour, in order to make him king, priest, and prophet of the British empire; and many lives were sacrificed before this insane insurrection was put down. If a 'little learning' is a 'dangerous thing,' you will have to keep people in a perfect state of idiocy in order to avoid that danger. I would, therefore, say that both the recommendations of the poet are impracticable.

The question arises, what are we to do? Simply to impress

upon ourselves and upon all people the importance of labouring in that much neglected branch of human knowledge—the knowledge of our own ignorance;—and of remembering that it is by a confession of real ignorance that real knowledge must be gained. But even when that further knowledge is not attained, still even the knowledge of the ignorance is a great thing in itself; so great, it seems, as to constitute Socrates the wisest of his time.

Some of the chief sources of *unknown* ignorance may be worth noticing here. They are to be found in our not being fully aware,

1. How inadequate a medium language is for conveying thought.
2. How inadequate our very minds are for the comprehension of many things.
3. How little we sometimes understand a word which may yet be familiar to us, and which we may use in reasoning. This piece of ignorance is closely connected with the two foregoing. (Hence, frequently, men will accept as an explanation of a phenomenon, a mere statement of the difficulty in other words.)
4. How utterly ignorant we are of efficient causes; and how the philosopher who refers to the ‘law of gravitation’ the falling of a stone to the earth, no further explains the phenomenon than the peasant, who would say it is the nature of it. The philosopher knows that the stone obeys the *same* law to which all *other* bodies are subject, and to which, for convenience, he gives the name of gravitation. His knowledge is only more *general* than the peasant’s; which, however, is a vast advantage.
5. How many words there are that express, not the nature of the thing they are applied to, but the manner in which they *affect us*: and which, therefore, give about as correct a notion of those things, as the word ‘crooked’ would if applied to a stick half immersed in water. (Such is the word *Chance*, with all its family.)
6. How many causes may and usually do, conduce to the same effect.
7. How liable the faculties, even of the ablest, are, to occasional failure; so that they shall overlook mistakes (and those often the most at variance with their own established notions) which, *when once exposed*, seem quite gross even to inferior men.
8. How much all are biassed, in all their moral reasonings, by self-love, or perhaps, rather, partiality to *human nature*, and other passions.
9. Dugald Stewart would add very justly, How little we know of *matter*; no more indeed than of mind; though all are prone

to attempt explaining the phenomena of mind by those of matter : for, what is *familiar*, men generally consider as *well understood* ; though the fact is oftener otherwise.

The errors arising from these causes, and from not calculating on them,—that is, in short, from ignorance of our own ignorance, have probably impeded philosophy more than all other obstacles put together.

Certain it is, that only by this ignorance of our ignorance can ‘a little learning’ become ‘a dangerous thing.’ The dangers of knowledge are not to be compared with the dangers of ignorance. A man is more likely to miss his way in darkness than in *twilight* : in twilight than in full sun. And those contemners of studies who say (with Mandeville, in his *Treatise against Charity-schools*), ‘If a horse knew as much as a man, I should not like to be his rider,’ ought to add, ‘If a man knew as little as a horse, I should not like to trust him to ride.’ It is indeed possible to educate the children of the poor so as to disqualify them for an humble and laborious station in life ; but this mistake does not so much consist in the *amount* of the knowledge imparted, as in the *kind* and the *manner* of education. Habits early engrafted on children, of regular attention,—of steady application to what they are about,—of prompt obedience to the directions they receive,—of cleanliness, order, and decent and modest behaviour, cannot but be of advantage to them in after life, whatever their station may be. And certainly, their familiar acquaintance with the precepts and example of Him who, when all stations of life were at his command, chose to be the reputed son of a poor mechanic, and to live with peasants and fishermen ; or, again, of his apostle Paul, whose own hands ‘ministered to his necessities,’ and to those of his companions :—such studies, I say, can surely never tend to unfit any one for a life of humble and contented industry.

What, then, is the ‘smattering’—the imperfect and superficial knowledge—that really does deserve contempt ? A slight and superficial knowledge is justly condemned, when it is put in the place of more full and exact knowledge. Such an acquaintance with chemistry and anatomy, *e.g.*, as would be creditable, and not useless, to a lawyer, would be contemptible for a physician ; and such an acquaintance with law as would be desirable for him, would be a most discreditable smattering for a lawyer.

It is to be observed that the word smattering is applied to two different kinds of scanty knowledge—the *rudimentary* and the *superficial*; though it seems the more strictly to belong to the latter. Now, as it is evident that no one can learn all things perfectly, it seems best for a man to make some pursuit his main object, according to, first, his *calling*; secondly, his *natural bent*; or thirdly, his *opportunities*: then, let him get a slight knowledge of what else is worth it, regulated in his choice by the same three circumstances; which should also determine, in great measure, where an elementary, and where a superficial knowledge is the more desirable. Such as are of the most dignified and philosophical nature are most proper for elementary study; and such as we are the most likely to be called upon to practise for ourselves, the most proper for superficial. *E.g.*, it would be to most men of no practical use, and, consequently, not worth while, to learn by heart the meaning of some of the Chinese characters; but it might be very well worth while to study the principles on which that most singular language is constructed: on the other hand, there is nothing very curious or interesting in the structure of the Portuguese language; but if one were going to travel in Portugal, it would be worth while to pick up some words and phrases. If both circumstances conspire, then, both kinds of information are to be sought for; and such things should be learned a little at *both ends*; that is, to understand the elementary and fundamental *principles*, and also to know some of the most remarkable *results*—a little of the rudiments, and a little of what is most called for in practice. *E.g.*, a man who has not made any of the physical or mathematical sciences his favourite pursuit, ought yet to know the principles of geometrical reasoning, and the elements of mechanics; and also know, by rote, something of the magnitude, distances, and motions of the heavenly bodies, though without having gone over the intermediate course of scientific demonstration.

Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, and Metaphysics, (or the philosophy of Mind,) are manifestly studies of an *elementary* nature, being concerned about the instruments which we employ in effecting our purposes; and Ethics, which is, in fact, a branch of metaphysics, may be called the elements of conduct. Such knowledge is far from showy. Elements do not much come into sight; they are like that part of a bridge which is under water,

and is therefore least admired, though it is not the work of least art and difficulty. On this ground it is suitable to females, as least leading to that pedantry which learned ladies must ever be peculiarly liable to, as well as least exciting that jealousy to which they must ever be exposed, while learning in them continues to be a *distinction*. A woman might, in this way, be very learned without any one's finding it out.

It may be worth while to suggest, that any student who is conscious of some indolence, and a disposition to procrastinate, will do well to *task* himself; laying down some *rules*—not hard ones—which he resolves to conform to, strictly. If, for instance, he has a mind to master some science or language, or to read through some book, or to write one, let him resolve to sit down to this work and do *something* of it, however little, every day, or on certain fixed days in every week, as the case may be. And it will often happen, that when, in compliance with his rule, he does thus set himself, perhaps reluctantly, to the task, he will, on some days, go beyond his resolution, and make a sensible progress. But if he had allowed himself to wait for the humour, it might, perhaps, have never come at all.

But the rule should be, as I have said, not a severe one; lest, like over-severe laws, (and a resolution is a self-imposed law,) it should be violated; according to the Proverb, that 'Wide will wear, but tight will tear.'¹

A. B. was a young man of respectable ability, who was making such encouraging progress in studying at college for his Degree, that he was in a fair way to gain a high Honour. He was obliged, however, to go, for his health, to pass a winter in another country, where he had many relatives. A friend advised him to form a resolution to sit down to his studies—happen what might—for *one hour every day*, and to let nothing divert him from this; never allowing any extra work on one day to compensate for a departure from the rule, the next. You will thus, said he, make sure of at least *retaining* what you have acquired; which, otherwise, you will, in the present stage, be liable rapidly to lose.

Oh, he replied, I mean to study hard: I shall read eight hours

¹ See *Proverbs and Precepts*.

a day during the whole of my absence. Well, said his friend, your resolve to read at least *one* hour, will be no impediment to your doing more. But I fear that numerous invitations to parties, &c., will call you off; and if you *calculate* on doing *much*, it may end in your doing nothing.

He was deaf, however, to this reasoning, and went off, designing,—and continuing to *design*, for nearly a year,—to begin to-morrow, or next week, reading eight hours a-day. And he came home without having once opened his books; and was so disheartened at finding that he had forgotten as much as it would cost him several months' hard work to recover, so as to put himself just where he had been before his departure, that he abandoned his studies in disgust, and never did anything to signify for the rest of his life.

'Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted.'

With respect to the deference due to the opinions (written or spoken) of intelligent and well-informed men, it may be remarked, that *before* a question has been fully argued, there is a presumption that they are in the right; but *afterwards*, if objections have been brought which they have failed to answer, the presumption is the other way. The wiser, and the more learned, and the more numerous, are those opposed to you, and the more strenuous and persevering their opposition, the greater is the probability that if there were any flaw in your argument they would have refuted you. And therefore your adhering to an opposite opinion from theirs, so far from being a mark of arrogant contempt, is, in reality, the strongest proof of a high respect for them. For example—The strongest confirmation of the fidelity of the translations of Scripture, published by the Irish School-Commissioners, is to be found in the many futile attempts, made by many able and learned men, to detect errors in them.

This important distinction is often overlooked.

'Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.'

It would have been well if Bacon had added some hints as

to the *mode* of study: *how* books are to be chewed, and swallowed, and digested. For, besides inattentive readers, who measure their proficiency by the pages they have gone over, it is quite possible, and not uncommon, to read most laboriously, even so as to get by heart the words of a book, without really *studying* it at all; that is, without employing the *thoughts* on the *subject*.

In particular, there is, in reference to Scripture,¹ ‘a habit cherished by some persons, of reading—assiduously, indeed,—but without any attentive reflection and studious endeavour to ascertain the real sense of what they read—concluding that whatever impression is found to be left on the mind after a bare perusal of the words, must be what the Sacred Writers designed. They use, in short, little or none of that care which is employed on any other subject in which we are much interested, to read through each treatise consecutively as a whole,—to compare one passage with others that may throw light on it, and to consider what was the general drift of the author, and what were the occasions, and the persons he had in view.

‘In fact, the real *students* of Scripture, properly so called, are, I fear, fewer than is commonly supposed. The theological student is often a student chiefly of some human system of divinity, fortified by *references* to Scripture, introduced from time to time as there is occasion. He proceeds—often unconsciously—by setting himself to ascertain, not what is the information or instruction to be derived from a certain narrative or discourse of one of the sacred Writers, but what aid can be derived from them towards establishing or refuting this or that point of dogmatic theology. Such a mode of study surely ought at least not to be exclusively pursued. At any rate, it cannot properly be called a *study of Scripture*.

‘There is, in fact, a danger of its proving a great *hindrance* to the profitable study of Scripture; for, so strong an association is apt to be established in the mind between certain expressions, and the *technical* sense to which they have been confined in some theological system, that when the student meets with them in Scripture, he at once understands them in that sense, in passages where perhaps an unbiassed examination of the

¹ See *Essays on the Difficulties of St. Paul's Epistles*, Essay x. p. 233.

context would plainly show that such was not the author's meaning. And such a student one may often find expressing the most unfeigned wonder at the blindness of those who cannot find in Scripture such and such doctrines, which appear to him to be as clearly set forth there as words can express; which perhaps they are, on the (often gratuitous) *supposition*, that those words are everywhere to be understood exactly in the sense which he has previously derived from some human system,—a system through which, as through a discoloured medium, he views Scripture. But this is not to take Scripture for one's guide, but rather to make one's self a *guide* to Scripture.

'Others, again, there are, who are habitual readers of the Bible, and perhaps of little else, but who yet cannot properly be said to *study* anything at all on the subject of religion, because, as was observed just above, they do not even attempt to exercise their mind on the subject, but trust to be sufficiently enlightened and guided by the mere act of perusal, while their minds remain in a passive state. And some, I believe, proceed thus on principle; considering that they are the better recipients of revealed truth the less they exercise their own reason.

'But this is to proceed on a totally mistaken view of the real province of reason. It would, indeed, be a great error to attempt *substituting* for revelation, conjectures framed in our own mind, or to speculate on matters concerning which we have an imperfect knowledge imparted to us by revelation, and could have had, without it, none at all. But this would be, not to use, but to abuse, our rational faculties. By the use of our senses, which are as much the gift of the Creator as anything else we enjoy,—and by employing our reason on the objects around us, we can obtain a certain amount of valuable knowledge. And beyond this, there are certain other points of knowledge unattainable by these faculties, and which God has thought fit to impart to us by his inspired messengers. But *both* the volumes—that of Nature and that of Revelation—which He has thought good to lay before us, are to be carefully studied. On both of them we must diligently employ the faculties with which He, the Author of both, has endued us, if we would derive the full benefit from his gifts.

‘The telescope, we know, brings within the sphere of our own vision much that would be undiscernible by the naked eye; but we must not the less employ our eyes in making use of it; and we must watch and calculate the motions, and reason on the appearances, of the heavenly bodies, which are visible only through the telescope, with the same care we employ in respect of those seen by the naked eye.

‘And an analogous procedure is requisite if we would derive the intended benefit from the pages of inspiration; which were designed not to save us the trouble of inquiring and reflecting, but to enable us, on some points, to inquire and reflect to better purpose—not to supersede the use of our reason, but to supply its deficiencies.’

Although, however, it is quite right, and most important, that the *thoughts* should be exercised on the subject of what you are reading, there is one mode of exercising the thoughts that is very hurtful; which is, that of *substituting conjectures* for attention to what the author says. *Preliminary* reflection on the subject is very useful in many cases; though, by the way, it is unsafe as a preparation for the study of *Scripture*; and, in all studies, care should be taken to guard against allowing the judgment to be biassed by notions hastily and prematurely adopted. And again, *after* you have studied an author, it will be very advisable (supposing it is an uninspired and consequently fallible one) to reflect on what he says, and consider whether he is right, and how far.

But while *actually engaged* in perusal, attend to what the writer actually says, and endeavour fairly to arrive at *his* meaning, *before* you proceed to speculate upon it for yourself.

The study of a book, in short, should be conducted nearly according to the same rule that Bacon lays down for the study of nature. He warns philosophers, earnestly and often, against substituting for what he calls the ‘*interrogatio naturæ*,’ the ‘*anticipatio naturæ*;’ that is, instead of attentive observation and experiment, forming conjectures as to what seems to us *likely*, or *fitting*, according to some hypothesis devised by ourselves. In like manner, in studying an author, you should *keep apart* interpretation and conjecture.

A good teacher warns a student of some book in a foreign language that he is learning, not to *guess* what the author is

likely to have meant, and then twist the words into that sense, against the idiom of the language; but to be *led by* the words in the first instance; and then, if a difficulty as to the sense remains, to guess which of the possible meanings of the words is the most likely to be the right.

E.g. The words in the original of John xviii. 15, ‘ὁ ἄλλος μαθητής,’ plainly signify ‘*the other disciple*;’ and one of the commentators, perceiving that this is inconsistent with the opinion he had taken up, that this disciple was John himself (since John had not been mentioned before, and the Article, therefore, would make it refer to Judas, who alone had been just above named), boldly suggests that the *reading must be wrong* (though all the MSS. agree in it), and that the Article ought to be omitted, because it *spoils the sense*; that is, the sense which agrees with a *conjecture* adopted in defiance of the words of the passage.

This one instance may serve as a specimen of the way in which some, instead of interpreting an author, undertake to re-write what he has said.

The like rule holds good in other studies, quite as much as in that of a language. We should be ever on our guard against the tendency to read through *coloured spectacles*.

Educational habits of thought, analogies, antecedent reasonings, feelings, and wishes, &c., will be always leading us to form some conjectural hypothesis, which is not necessarily hurtful, and may sometimes furnish a useful hint, but which must be most carefully watched, lest it produce an unfair bias, and lead you to strain into a conformity with it the words or the phenomena before you.

A man sets out with a conjecture as to what the Apostles are *likely* to have said, or *ought* to have said, in conformity with the theological system he has learnt; or what the Most High may have done or designed; or what is, or is not, agreeable to the ‘*analogy of faith*;¹’ i.e., of a piece with the christian system,—namely, that which *he* has been taught, by fallible *men*, to regard as the christian system; and then he proceeds to examine Scripture, as he would examine, with *leading questions*, a witness whom he had summoned in his cause.

¹ See Campbell *On the Gospels*.

‘As the fool thinketh,
So the bell chinketh.’

Perhaps he ‘*prays through*’ all the Bible; not with a candid and teachable mind, seeking instruction, but (unconsciously) praying that he may *find himself in the right*. And he will seldom fail.

‘Hic liber est in quo quærit sua dogmata quisque;
Invenit et pariter dogmata quisque sua.’¹

‘In this book many students seek each one to find
The doctrine or precept that’s most to his mind;
And each of them finds what he earnestly seeks;
For as the fool thinks, even so the bell speaks.’

It is the same with philosophy. If you have a strong wish to find phenomena such as to confirm the conjectures you have formed, and allow that wish to bias your examination, you are ill-fitted for interrogating Nature. Both that, and *the other volume* of the records of what God does,—Revelation,—are to be interrogated, not as *witnesses*, but as *instructors*. You must let all your conjectures *hang loose* upon you; and be prepared to learn *from* what is written in each of those volumes, with the aid of the conjectures of reason; not *from* reason (nor, by the bye, from feelings and fancies, and wishes, and human authority), with Scripture for your *aid*.

This latter procedure, which is a very common one with theological students, may be called making an *anagram* of Scripture,—taking it to pieces and reconstructing it on the model of some human system of ‘Institutes:’—building a Temple of one’s own, consisting of the stones of the true one, pulled down, and put together in a new fashion.

Yet Divines of this description are often considered by others as well as by themselves, pre-eminently scriptural, from their continual employment of the *very words* of Scripture, and their readiness in citing a profusion of texts. But, in reality, instead of using a human *commentary* on Scripture, they use Scripture itself as a kind of commentary on some human system. They make the *warp* human, and interweave an abundance of Scripture as a *woof*; which is just the reverse of the right procedure.

¹ These lines were by Samuel Wesenfels, a Swiss theologian, who lived in the early part of the last century.

But this may be called, truly, in a certain sense, '*taking a text from Scripture*,' '*preaching such and such a doctrine out of Scripture*,' and '*improving Scripture*.'

Thus it is that men, when comparing their opinions with the standard of God's Word, suffer these opinions to *bend the rule* by which they are to be measured. But he who studies the Scriptures, should remember that he is consulting the Spirit of Truth, and if he would hope for his aid, through whose enlightening and supporting grace alone those Scriptures can be read with advantage, he must search honestly and earnestly for the truth.

It is worth remarking that some of the books which are the best worth being '*chewed and digested*,' and which perhaps will have produced a *lasting* effect on the public mind, will be such as have not attained the very first place in *immediate* popularity. The first place will oftener be gained, for a season, by Writers who understand well how (as Shakespere has expressed it) '*to catch the tune of the times*;'—who bring forward a showy defence of popular prejudices;—or who advance amusing and striking paradoxes, which will not bear the test of calm examination, but are made plausible by declamatory eloquence, or by a parade of supposed learning, and pretensions to profound Philosophy;—or who throw themselves into the extreme views of some prevalent Party;—and universally, those who address themselves to (what will ever be the majority) such as are not accurate and clear reasoners, or thoughtful students.

One who sets himself, successfully, to bring to light neglected and forgotten truths, and to clear away any prevailing confusion of thought, and to refute popular fallacies, and who addresses himself to the judicious, and considerate, and candid, will indeed perhaps attract no inconsiderable degree of attention, but must be prepared to content himself with the *second* place in *present* popularity; though he may be remembered and appreciated when the other class of Writers are forgotten. If you wish your garden to make a fine show, speedily, you must sow it with gaudy Annuals, rather than plant it with forest-trees.

The former class of Writers resemble the heavy showers which drench the land at once with wet which soon runs off.

The others are like a heavy fall of snow, which lies for a time on the dry surface of the frozen ground, but gradually melts and sinks into the earth to supply the springs for the ensuing summer.

‘Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.’

Writing an Analysis, table of Contents, Index, or Notes to any book, is very important for the study, properly so called, of any subject. And so, also, is the practice of *previously* conversing or writing on the subject you are about to study.

I have elsewhere alluded to this kind of practice,¹ and suggested to the teacher ‘to put before his pupils, *previously* to their reading each lesson, some questions pertaining to the matter of it; requiring of them answers, oral or written, the best they can think of *without* consulting the book. Next, let them read the lesson, having other questions, such as may lead to any needful explanations, put before them as they proceed. And afterwards let them be examined (introducing numerous examples framed by themselves, and by the teacher) as to the portion they have learned, in order to judge how far they remember it.

‘Of the three kinds of questions,—which may be called, 1, *preliminary* questions; 2, questions of *instruction*; and 3, questions of *examination*,—the last alone are, by a considerable portion of instructors, commonly employed. And the elementary books commonly known as ‘catechisms,’ or ‘books in question and answer,’ consist, in reality, of questions of this description.

‘But the second kind,—what is properly to be called instructive questioning,—is employed by all who deserve to be reckoned good teachers.

‘The first kind—the preliminary questioning—is employed (systematically and constantly) but by few. And, at first sight, it might be supposed by those who have not had experience of it, that it would be likely to increase the learners’ difficulties.

¹ See Preface to *Easy Lessons on Reasoning*, p. v.

But if any well-qualified instructor will but carefully and judiciously try the experiment (in teaching any kind of science), he will be surprised to find to how great a degree this exercise of the student's mind on the subject will contribute to his advancement. He will find that what has been taught in the mode above suggested, will have been learnt in a shorter time, will have been far the more thoroughly understood, and will be fixed incomparably the better in the memory.'

Curiosity is as much the parent of attention, as attention is of memory; therefore the first business of a teacher—first, not only in point of time, but of importance—should be to excite, not merely a general curiosity on the subject of the study, but a particular curiosity on particular points in that subject. To teach one who has no curiosity to learn, is to sow a field without ploughing it.

And this process saves a student from being (as many are) intellectually damaged by having a very good memory. For, an unskilful teacher is content to put before his pupils what they have to learn, and ascertaining that they remember it. And thus those of them whose memory is ready and retentive, have their mind left in a merely passive state, and are like a person always carried about in a sedan chair, till he has almost lost the use of his limbs. And then it is made a wonder that a person who has been so well taught, and who was so quick in learning and remembering, should not prove an able man; which is about as reasonable as to expect that a capacious cistern, if filled, should be converted into a perennial fountain. Many are saved, by the deficiency of their memory, from being spoiled by their education; for, those who have no extraordinary memory are driven to supply its defects by *thinking*. If they do not remember a mathematical demonstration, they are driven to devise one. If they do not exactly retain what Aristotle or Smith have said, they are driven to consider what they were *likely* to have said, or ought to have said. And thus their faculties are invigorated by exercise.

Now, this kind of exercise a skilful teacher will afford to *all*; so that no one shall be spoiled by the goodness of his memory.

A very common practice may be here noticed, which should

be avoided, if we would create a habit of studying with profit—that of making children *learn by rote* what they do not *understand*. ‘It is done on this plea—that they will hereafter learn the meaning of what they have been thus taught, and will be able to make a practical use of it.’¹ But no attempt at economy of time can be more injudicious. Let any child whose capacity is so far matured as to enable him to comprehend an explanation,—*e.g.*, of the Lord’s Prayer—have it *then* put before him for the first time, and when he is made acquainted with the meaning of it, set to learn it by heart; and can any one doubt that, in less than half a day’s application, he would be able to repeat it fluently? And the same would be the case with other forms. All that is learned by rote by a child before he is competent to attach a meaning to the words he utters, would not, if all put together, amount to so much as would cost him, when able to understand it, a week’s labour to learn perfectly. Whereas, it may cost the toil, often the vain toil, of many years, to unlearn the habit of *formalism*—of repeating words by rote without attending to their meaning; a habit which every one conversant with education knows to be, in all subjects, most readily acquired by children, and with difficulty avoided, even with the utmost care of the teacher; but which such a plan must inevitably tend to generate. It is often said, and very truly, that it is important to form early habits of piety; but to train a child in one kind of habit, is not the most likely way of forming the opposite one; and nothing can be more contrary to true piety, than the Romish superstition (for such in fact it is) of attaching efficacy to the repetition of a certain form of words as a charm, independent of the understanding and of the heart.

‘It is also said, with equal truth, that we ought to take advantage of the facility which children possess of learning words: but to infer from thence, that Providence designs us to make such a use (or rather abuse) of this gift as we have been censuring, is as if we were to take advantage of the readiness with which a new-born babe swallows whatever is put into its mouth, to dose it with ardent spirits, instead of wholesome food and necessary

¹ *London Review*, No. 2, pp. 412, 413.

medicine. The readiness with which children learn and remember words, is in truth a most important advantage if rightly employed; viz. if applied to the acquiring that mass of what may be called *arbitrary* knowledge of insulated facts, which *can only* be learned by rote, and which is necessary in after life; when the acquisition of it would both be more troublesome, and would encroach on time that might otherwise be better employed. Chronology, names of countries, weights and measures, and indeed all the *words* of any language, are of this description. If a child had even ten times the ordinary degree of the faculty in question, a judicious teacher would find abundance of useful employment for it, without resorting to any that could possibly be detrimental to his future habits, moral, religious, or intellectual.'

One very useful precept for students, is never to *remain long* puzzling at any difficulty; but to lay the book and the subject aside, and return to it some hours after, or next day; after having turned the attention to something else. Sometimes a person will weary his mind for several hours in some efforts (which might have been spared) to make out some difficulty; and next day, when he returns to the subject, will find it quite easy.

The like takes place in the effort to recollect some *name*. You may fatigue yourself in vain for hours together; and if you turn to something else (which you might as well have done at once) the name will, as it were, flash across you without an effort.

There is something analogous to this, in reference to the scent of dogs. When a wounded bird, for instance, has been lost in the thicket, and the dogs fail, after some search, to find it, a skilful sportsman always draws them off, and hunts them elsewhere for an hour, and then brings them back to the spot to try afresh; and they will often, then, find their game readily; though, if they had been hunting for it all the time, they would have failed.

It seems as if the dog—and the mind—having got into a kind of *wrong* track, continued in the same error, till drawn completely away elsewhere.

Always trust, therefore, for the overcoming of a difficulty, not, to *long continued* study after you have once got bewildered, but to *repeated* trials, at intervals.

It may be here observed that the student of any science or art, should not only distinctly understand all the technical language, and all the rules of the art, but also learn them by heart, so that they may be remembered as familiarly as the alphabet, and employed *constantly* and with scrupulous exactness. Otherwise, technical language will prove an encumbrance instead of an advantage; just as a suit of clothes would be, if, instead of putting them on and wearing them, one should carry them about in his hands.

‘*Writing maketh an exact man.*’

It conduces much to mental improvement to keep a *Common-place-book*, in which to record any valuable remarks you may have heard in conversation, or thoughts that may have occurred to your own mind. And you should not scruple to put down the crudest and wildest speculations; since when you are writing for no eye but your own, you will not have committed yourself to any erroneous views.

I would not recommend (as some have done) *transcribing* long passages out of books that are easily accessible. Mere references will fully answer the purpose, except in the case of any work that is scarce. But you should put down any remarks that you may have heard made, or that occur to you, respecting what you have been reading.

Put down the *date* of every article you enter; that you may thus have something of a record of your own mental progress! And write on only *one side* of the paper, that you may have room for subsequent remarks.

And I would add, do not encumber yourself at once with a huge book full of blank leaves, which it would take years to fill, and which would be inconvenient for carrying about with you: but use a common copy-book; and when that is filled, stitch on another to it.

And take care to keep a table of Contents, with references to

the pages of your manuscript, so that you may easily refer to any Article you wish to look at.

I believe hardly any one who adopts this suggestion will fail to find benefit from it. Besides other advantages of greater importance, it will help to cultivate an easy, unaffected, and simple Style of writing; since when a man is writing only for his own use, he will write not as if he *wanted to say something*, but as if he had *something to say*.

‘There is no stond or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies.’

There are some kinds of crops which, besides the direct return to the husbandman, tend to improve the soil; and some are even cultivated for the express and sole purpose of being ploughed in as manure. And so it is with studies: though there is hardly any branch of knowledge of which one could venture to pronounce that it could not, in good hands, prove of direct utility. The calculation of the eclipses of Jupiter’s satellites, many a man might have been disposed, originally, to regard as a most unprofitable study. But the utility of it to navigation (in the determination of longitudes) is now well known.

It is remarkable that the cry of ‘What is the use?’ is often in the mouths of persons whose own favourite pursuits are just those whose utility it is the most difficult to make out. A man who was an excellent Greek scholar, knowing the right quantity of every syllable in the language, and skilful in scanning a Greek chorus, but quite ignorant of, and contemning, all Philosophy, including that of the ancient Greeks, used to be often saying that he ‘did not see the *use* of all that.’ Aristotle’s works he admired as very good Greek; but neither valued, nor understood, the matter of them. He was compared to the Cossack soldier, of whom the story is told that having found, among his plunder, a finely-embroidered casket full of pearls and precious stones, he emptied out the jewels into the kennel, and eagerly pocketed the casket!

Another person (I pledge myself for the truth of the anecdote) told a friend of his, whom he guessed, he said, to have a natural turn for Logic, that he was impressed with a belief

(though confessing his entire ignorance of it) of the utter *uselessness* of the study. He was, himself, an ardent Naturalist ; especially knowing in butterflies. Now without any disparagement of the pursuits of the Naturalist, it may surely be doubted whether the investigation of what relates to the Reasoning-process, which is characteristic of MAN, and which is going on, well or ill, in the mind of every man, every day, can fairly be reckoned either *less* useful, or, as a mere amusing exercise of the mind (like chess, and other games), less rationally interesting, than the examination of the wings of butterflies.

It is a pity that Bacon did not more fully explain the mode in which different kinds of studies act on the mind. As an exercise of the reasoning faculty, pure mathematics is an admirable exercise, because it consists of *reasoning* alone, and does not encumber the student with any exercise of *judgment* : and it is well always to begin with learning one thing at a time, and to defer a combination of mental exercises to a later period. But then it is important to remember that mathematics does *not* exercise the *judgment* ; and consequently, if too exclusively pursued, may leave the student very ill qualified for moral reasonings.

¹ 'The definitions, which are the principles of our reasoning, are very *few*, and the axioms still fewer ; and both are, for the most part, *laid down* and *placed before the student in the outset* ; the introduction of a new Definition or Axiom being of comparatively rare occurrence, at wide intervals, and with a *formal* statement ; besides which, there is no room for *doubt* concerning either. On the other hand, in all reasonings which regard matters of fact, we introduce, almost at *every step*, fresh and fresh propositions (to a very great number), which had not been elicited in the course of our reasoning, but are taken for granted ; viz., facts, and laws of nature, which are here the principles of our reasoning, and *maxims*, or 'elements of belief,' which answer to the axioms in mathematics. If, at the opening of a treatise, for example, on chemistry, on agriculture, on political-economy, &c., the author should make, as in mathematics, a

¹ *Elements of Logic.*

formal statement of all the propositions he intended to assume as granted, throughout the whole work, both he and his readers would be astonished at the number; and, of these, many would be only probable, and there would be much room for doubt as to the *degree* of probability, and for judgment in ascertaining that degree.

‘Moreover, mathematical axioms are always employed precisely in the same simple form: *e. g.*, the axiom that ‘things equal to the same are equal to one another,’ is cited, whenever there is need, in those very words; whereas the maxims employed in the other class of subjects, admit of, and require, continual modifications in the application of them. *E. g.*, ‘the stability of the laws of nature,’ which is our constant assumption in inquiries relating to natural philosophy, appears in many different shapes, and in some of them does not possess the same complete certainty as in others. *E. g.*, when, from having always observed a certain sheep ruminating, we infer, that this individual sheep will continue to ruminate, we assume that ‘the property which has hitherto belonged to this sheep will remain unchanged;’ when we infer the same property of all sheep, we assume that ‘the property which belongs to this individual belongs to the whole Species:’ if, on comparing sheep with some other kinds of horned animals,¹ and finding that all agree in ruminating, we infer that ‘all horned animals ruminate,’ we assume that ‘the whole of a genus or class are likely to agree in any point wherein many species of that genus agree:’ or in other words, ‘that if one of two properties, &c., has *often* been found accompanied by another, and never without it, the former will be *universally* accompanied by the latter.’ Now all these are merely different forms of the maxim, that ‘nature is uniform in her operations;’ which, it is evident, varies in expression in almost every different case where it is applied, and the application of which admits of every degree of evidence, from perfect moral certainty, to mere conjecture.

‘The same may be said of an infinite number of principles

¹ Viz., having horns *on the skull*. What are called the horns of the rhinoceros are quite different in origin, and in structure, as well as in situation, from what are properly called horns.

and maxims appropriated to, and employed in, each particular branch of study. Hence, all such reasonings are, in comparison of mathematics, very complex ; requiring so much *more* than that does, beyond the process of merely deducing the conclusion logically from the premises : so that it is no wonder that the longest mathematical demonstration should be so much more easily constructed and understood, than a much shorter train of just reasoning concerning real facts. The former has been aptly compared to a long and steep, but even and regular, flight of steps, which tries the breath, and the strength, and the perseverance only ; while the latter resembles a short, but rugged and uneven, ascent up a precipice ; which requires a quick eye, agile limbs, and a firm step ; and in which we have to tread now on this side, now on that—ever considering, as we proceed, whether this or that projection will afford room for our foot, or whether some loose stone may not slide from under us. There are probably as many steps of pure reasoning in one of the longer of Euclid's demonstrations, as in the whole of an argumentative treatise on some other subject, occupying perhaps a considerable volume.

‘ Hence it is that mathematical reasoning, as it calls for no exercise of judgment respecting probabilities, is the best kind of introductory exercise ; and from the same cause, is apt, when too exclusively pursued, to make men incorrect moral-reasoners.

‘ As for those ethical and legal reasonings which in some respects resemble those of mathematics, (viz. such as keep clear of all assertions respecting facts) they have this difference ; that not only men are not so completely *agreed* respecting the maxims and principles of Ethics and Law, but the meaning also of each term cannot be absolutely, and for ever, fixed by an arbitrary definition ; on the contrary, a great part of our labour consists in distinguishing accurately the various senses in which men employ each term,—ascertaining which is the most proper,—and taking care to avoid confounding them together.

‘ It may be worth while to add in this place, that, as a candid disposition,—a hearty desire to judge fairly, and to attain truth,—are evidently necessary with a view to give fair play to the

reasoning-powers, in subjects where we are liable to a bias from interests or feelings, so, a fallacious perversion of this maxim finds a place in the minds of some persons: who accordingly speak disparagingly of *all* exercise of the reasoning-faculty in moral and religious subjects; declaiming on the insufficiency of *mere* intellectual power for the attainment of truth in such matters,—on the necessity of appealing to the heart rather than to the head, &c., and then leading their readers or themselves to the conclusion that the less we *reason* on such subjects the safer we are.

‘But the proper office of candour is to *prepare* the mind not for the *rejection* of all evidence, but for the right *reception* of evidence;—not, to be a *substitute* for reasons, but to enable us *fairly to weigh* the reasons on both sides. Such persons as I am alluding to are in fact saying that since just weights *alone*, without a just balance, will avail nothing, therefore we have only to take care of the scales, and let the weights take care of themselves.

‘This kind of tone is of course most especially to be found in such writers as consider it expedient to inculcate on the mass of mankind what—there is reason to suspect—they do not themselves fully believe, and which they apprehend is the more likely to be rejected the more it is investigated.’¹

A curious anecdote (which I had heard, in substance, some years before) was told me by the late Sir Alexander Johnstone. When he was acting as temporary governor of Ceylon (soon after its cession), he sat once as judge in a trial of a prisoner for a robbery and murder; and the evidence seemed to him so conclusive, that he was about to charge the jury (who were native Cingalese) to find a verdict of guilty. But one of the jurors asked and obtained permission to examine the witnesses himself. He had them brought in one by one, and cross-examined them so ably as to elicit the fact that they were *themselves* the perpetrators of the crime, which they afterwards

¹ I have inserted in the Appendix to the *Elements of Logic*, and also in the Edition of Paley’s *Evidences*, some extracts from Writers of this description.

had conspired to impute to the prisoner. And they were accordingly put on their trial and convicted.

Sir A. J. was greatly struck by the intelligence displayed by this juror; the more, as he was only a small farmer, who was not known to have had any remarkable advantages of education. He sent for him, and after commending the wonderful sagacity he had shown, inquired eagerly what his studies had been. The man replied that he had never read but one book, the only one he possessed, which had long been in his family, and which he delighted to study in his leisure-hours. This book he was prevailed on to show to Sir A. J., who put it into the hands of one who knew the Cingalese language. It turned out to be a translation into that language of a large portion of Aristotle's *Organon*. It appears that the Portuguese, when they first settled in Ceylon and other parts of the East, translated into the native languages several of the works then studied in the European Universities; among which were the Latin versions of Aristotle.

The Cingalese in question said that if his understanding had been in any degree cultivated and improved, it was to that book he owed it.

It is likely, however (as was observed to me by the late Bishop Copleston), that any other book, containing an equal amount of close reasoning and accurate definition, might have answered the same purpose in sharpening the intellect of this Cingalese.

It is very important to warn all readers of the influence likely to be exercised in the formation of their opinions, *indirectly*, and by works not professedly argumentative, such as Poems and Tales. Fletcher of Saltoun said, he would let any one have the making of the laws of a country, if he might have the making of their ballads.

An observation in the *Lectures on Political Economy* on one cause which has contributed to foster an erroneous opinion of the superior moral purity of poor and half-civilized countries, is equally applicable to a multitude of other cases, on various subjects. 'One powerful, but little suspected cause, I take to be, an early familiarity with poetical descriptions of pure, unso-

phisticated, rustic life, in remote, sequestered, and unenlightened districts;—of the manly virtue and practical wisdom of our simple forefathers, before the refinements of luxury had been introduced;—of the adventurous wildness, so stimulating to the imagination, of savage or pastoral life, in the midst of primæval forests, lofty mountains, and all the grand scenery of uncultivated nature. Such subjects and scenes are much better adapted for poets than thronged cities, workshops, coalpits, and iron-foundries. And poets, whose object is to please, of course keep out of sight all the odious or disgusting circumstances pertaining to the life of the savage or the untutored clown, and dwell exclusively on all the amiable and admirable parts of that simplicity of character which they feign or fancy. Early associations are thus formed, whose influence is often the stronger and the more lasting, from the very circumstance that they are formed *unconsciously*, and do not come in the form of propositions demanding a deliberate assent. Poetry does not profess to aim at conviction; but it often leaves impressions which affect the reasoning and the judgment. And a false impression is perhaps oftener conveyed in other ways than by sophistical argument; because *that* rouses the mind to exert its powers, and to assume, as it were, a reasoning mood.¹

The influence exercised by such works is overlooked by those who suppose that a child's character, moral and intellectual, is formed by those books only which are put into his hands with that *design*. As hardly anything can accidentally touch the soft clay without stamping its mark on it, so, hardly any reading can interest a child without contributing in some degree, though the book itself be afterwards totally forgotten, to form the character; and the parents, therefore, who, merely requiring from him a certain course of *study*, pay little or no attention to story-books, are educating him they know not how.

And here, I would observe, that, in books designed for children, there are two extremes that should be avoided. The

¹ In an article in a Review I have seen mention made of a person who discovered the falsity of a certain doctrine (which, by the way, is nevertheless a true one, that of Malthus) *instinctively*. This kind of instinct, i. e. the habit of forming opinions at the suggestion rather of feeling than of reason, is very common.

one, a reference to religious principles in connexion with matters too trifling and undignified; arising from a well-intentioned zeal, causing a forgetfulness of the maxim whose notorious truth has made it proverbial, 'Too much familiarity breeds contempt.' And the other is the contrary, and still more prevailing, extreme, arising from a desire to preserve a due *reverence* for religion, at the expense of its useful application in conduct. But a line may be drawn which will keep clear of both extremes. We should not exclude the association of things sacred with whatever are to *ourselves* trifling matters, (for 'these little things are great' to children), but, with whatever is viewed by *them* as trifling. Everything is great or small in reference to the parties concerned. The private concerns of any obscure individual are very insignificant to the world at large, but they are of great importance to himself. And all worldly affairs must be small in the sight of the Most High; but irreverent familiarity is engendered in the mind of any one, then, and then only, when things sacred are associated with such as are, to *him*, insignificant things.

And I would add that those works of fiction are worse than unprofitable that inculcate morality, with an exclusion of all reference to religious principle. This is obviously and notoriously the character of Miss Edgeworth's moral tales. And so entire and resolute is this exclusion, that it is maintained at the expense of what may be called poetical truth: it destroys, in many instances, the probability of the tale, and the naturalness of the characters. That Christianity *does* exist, every one must believe as an incontrovertible fact; nor can any one deny, that, whether true or false, it does exercise,—at least is supposed to exercise,—an influence on the feelings and conduct of some of the believers in it. To represent, therefore, persons of various ages, sex, country, and station in life, as practising, on the most trying occasions, every kind of duty, and encountering every kind of danger, difficulty, and hardship, while none of them ever makes the least reference to a religious motive, is as decidedly at variance with reality—what is called in works of fiction, *unnatural*—as it would be to represent Mahomet's enthusiastic followers as rushing into battle without any thought of his promised paradise. This, therefore, is a blemish *in point*

of art, which every reader possessing taste must perceive, whatever may be his religious or non-religious persuasion. But a far higher, and more important, question than that of taste is involved. For though Miss Edgeworth might entertain opinions which would not permit her, with consistency, to attribute more to the influence of religion than she has done, and in that case may stand acquitted, *in foro conscientiæ*, of wilfully suppressing anything which she acknowledges to be true and important; yet, as a writer, it must still be considered as a great blemish, in the eyes at least of those who think differently, that virtue should be studiously inculcated, with scarcely any reference to what they regard as the mainspring of it—that vice should be traced to every other source except the want of religious principle—that the most radical change from worthlessness to excellence should be represented as wholly independent of that Agent, which they consider as the only one that can accomplish it—and that consolation under affliction should be represented as derived from every source, except the one which they look to as the only true and sure one. ‘Is it not because there is no God in Israel, that ye have sent to inquire of Baalzebub, the God of Ekron?’ This vital defect in such works should be constantly pointed out to the young reader; and he should be warned that, to realize the picture of noble, disinterested, thorough-going virtue, presented in such and such an instance, it is absolutely necessary to resort to those principles which, in these fictions, are unnoticed. He should, in short, be reminded, that all these ‘things that are lovely and of good report,’ which have been placed before him, are the genuine fruits of the Holy Land; though the spies who have brought them bring also an evil report of that land, and would persuade us to remain wandering in the wilderness.

The student of history, also, should be on his guard against the indirect influence likely to be exercised on his opinions. ¹ ‘An injudicious reader of history is liable to be misled by the circumstance, that historians and travellers occupy them-

¹ *Lectures on Political Economy.*

selves principally (as is natural) with the relation of whatever is *remarkable*, and different from what commonly takes place in their own time or country. They do not dwell on the ordinary transactions of human life (which are precisely what furnish the data on which Political-economy proceeds), but on everything that appears an exception to general rules, and in any way such as could not have been anticipated. The sort of information which the Political-economist wants, is introduced, for the most part, only incidentally and obliquely; and is to be collected, imperfectly, from scattered allusions. So that if you will give a rapid glance, for instance, at the history of these islands from the time of the Norman conquest to the present day, you will find that the differences between the two states of the country, in most of the points with which that science is conversant, are but very imperfectly accounted for in the main outline of the narrative.

‘If it were possible that we could have a full report of the common business and common conversation, in the markets, the shops, and the wharfs of Athens and Piræus, for a single day, it would probably throw more light on the state of things in Greece at that time, in all that Political-economy is most concerned with, than all the histories that are extant put together.

‘There is a danger, therefore, that the mind of the student, who proceeds in the manner I have described, may have been even drawn off from the class of facts which are, for the purpose in question, the most important to be attended to.

‘For, it should be observed that, in all studies there is a danger to be guarded against, which Bacon, with his usual acuteness, has pointed out: that most men are so anxious to make or seek for, some application of what they have been learning, as not unfrequently to apply it improperly, by endeavouring, lest their knowledge should lie by them idle, to bring it to bear on some question to which it is irrelevant; like Horace’s painter, who, being skilful in drawing a cypress, was for introducing one into the picture of a shipwreck. Bacon complains of this tendency among the logicians and metaphysicians of his day, who introduced an absurd and pernicious application of the studies in which they had been conversant,

into natural philosophy: 'Artis sæpe ineptus fit usus, *ne sit nullus.*' But the same danger besets those conversant in every other study likewise, that may from time to time have occupied a large share of each man's attention. He is tempted to seek for a solution of every question on every subject, by a reference to his own favourite science or branch of knowledge; like a schoolboy when first entrusted with a knife, who is for trying its edge on everything that comes in his way.'

Etymology—which may be reckoned a branch of antiquarian study—is very liable to this kind of abuse. The study is curious and interesting, and may be so applied as to be very useful. It may supply a useful hint—a slight presumption—as to the sense of some word. But etymologists are apt to fall into the error of pretending to decide on the *actual* meaning of a word, and even the nature of the thing denoted by it, from the Root to which they have traced it; forgetting that the 'true sense' of a word must be, *that which is understood* by it. Thus, Horne Tooke, having traced the word 'TRUTH' from the verb to 'trow'—*i. e. believe*, infers that there can be no such thing as absolute 'truth,' independent of men's belief. And another writer has argued that the word *Hiereus*, which was applied to the Jewish and Pagan sacrificing-priests (and answering to the Latin *sacerdos*), may rightly be applied to a christian Minister, because, forsooth, it is derived from 'hieros,' *sacred*, and our ministers are concerned about things sacred.¹ The Apostles, however, thought otherwise. They were doubtless aware of the etymology of the word *Hiereus*; but they knew what kind of office it did, actually, in their day, denote; and if they had meant to ordain men to any such office, they would not have carefully abstained—as they did—from applying it to any of the Elders they appointed.² But if we are to be completely led by etymology, we must maintain that Priest (or Presbyter) can never mean anything but a man *advanced in years*: and the same with the word 'Sir,' which is evidently a contraction from *Senior*. And we must go on to maintain that

¹ See *Charge* of 1857, § i.

² See Discourse on the *Christian Priesthood*, and also Essay on the *Kingdom of Christ*.

'*Pontifex*' can only mean a 'bridge-builder,' and that September must denote the month commonly called July, since that is the *seventh* month, and 'septem' signifies *seven*.

It may be added that, besides this kind of misapplication of any branch of knowledge and skill ['*artis ineptus usus*'] there is also another, to which those are liable, who are, or believe themselves to be, eminent in some department. They are tempted to feel a bias in favour of the more *paradoxical side* of any question,—that which affords the most scope for the display of their professional learning and ingenuity, and is the most remote from what would naturally occur to a man of mere plain good sense. A very profound lawyer, *e.g.*, or a deeply-read theologian, will be tempted to feel a preference for some subtle and farfetched interpretation of a clause in any law, or of a passage of Scripture, such as calls for much recondite learning and skill to maintain it. For they are likely to feel that if they come to the conclusion which would at once suggest itself to an ordinary man, they have their superior learning and skill for nothing. In this way there is a danger of misapplying art ['*ne sit usus nullus*'] that it may not lie idle.

Hence the ancient remark has become proverbial: 'There is no absurdity so gross that has not been maintained by one or other of the philosophers.' One remarkable instance of the kind of bias alluded to, was, a decision of a most learned and acute Lord Chancellor, that the Court ought not to grant an injunction against the piracy of a book, if there could be the most remote suspicion that it might be of an immoral tendency; and that the piratical Publisher should be allowed (as accordingly was soon after done) himself to plead this as a bar to an injunction.

Now any man of plain good sense, and honesty, unversed in legal subtleties, would have decided that a work (as well as a person) should be *presumed* innocent, in the absence of all proof of guilt; and that no one should be allowed to plead his own wrong-doing in his own defence.

There is a remarkable instance of perverted ingenuity, in the interpretation which was once put on one of the Rules of the Irish Education-Board. Among the books for united education sanctioned by the unanimous approval of the original

Commissioners, were some extracts from the Scriptures, and some other books of a religious character, but without anything controversial. It was provided, however, that no child whose parents might object, should be obliged to use these books. And though it scarcely ever did happen that there was any call for the application of that rule, this provision for any—even excessive—scruple, gave complete confidence and satisfaction for many years. But when some new Commissioners came into office, with different views, they discovered that the rule (which had been worded not very guardedly, or with any thought of special-pleading subtleties) might be brought to bear a sense quite unthought of. It might be interpreted to mean that, if any *one* child (in a school of, perhaps, hundreds) objected to these books, they were to be altogether withheld from the general instruction of *all* the rest! And the words certainly will bear that meaning, if you lay aside all regard for reason, and for justice, and the known design of the framers of the rule, and the constant practice of many years, and the fair expectations of the Public. The main object was, doubtless, the gratification of a certain Party. But some degree of exultation also was probably felt, at the *ingenuity* of hitting on an interpretation of a rule, so wide from its design. A witness who was examined as to this matter before a Parliamentary Committee, remarked to them that hardly any formula *can* be so framed as not to admit of being thus ingeniously wrested into a new meaning, by one who should set at nought common sense and common honesty. For instance, the '*Oath of Abjuration*'—which many regard as a bulwark of Church and State, reprobates the doctrine 'that princes deprived by the Pope may be deposed or murdered by their subjects;' and declares that 'no foreign prelate, &c., has any authority' over us. Now, a subtle Jesuit might instruct his pupil to take this oath while meditating the overthrow of our Government and Religion. For—not to mention that the word '*Princes*' is *masculine*, and therefore does not extend to a *Queen*—he might say that a sovereign deprived by the Pope *cannot* be deposed by his subjects, because he *is* already deposed, and *has* no subjects; nor can he be *murdered*, if the Pope (possessing rightful power) has declared his life forfeit; since murder always implies *wrong*-

ful slaying ; else, the public executioner would be guilty of it. And the Pope, if he is the legitimate Head of the whole christian Church, cannot be, anywhere, a '*foreign prelate*.' As for his being, perhaps, a native of Italy, and temporal Sovereign of the Papal States, that is nothing to the purpose. For, our ancestors, while administering this very oath, were governed by a king who was a native German, and Sovereign of Hanover ; but whom yet they certainly did not reckon a '*foreign potentate*.'

Again, learned divines have maintained, with apparent seriousness, that all the '*tongues*' spoken by the Disciples on the day of Pentecost, were merely *Greek*, in a somewhat unusual style ; Greek having been, it seems, the universal language of Jews, Romans, Parthians, Medes, &c., each of them, moreover, recognising with much wonder, this odd kind of Greek as their '*own tongue wherein they were born !*' Pilate must, therefore, have been mistaken in affixing to the cross an inscription in *three* languages ; and so must the chief Captain, Claudius Lysias, who wondered that Paul, whom he took for an Egyptian (*Acts* xxi.), could '*speak Greek !*'

Others, again, have maintained that the '*gift of tongues*' consisted in the utterance of sounds which had *no meaning* at all, either to the hearers or the speaker.¹

Again, any man of plain good sense would be likely to perceive, (at least when his attention is called to the point), that the Apostle Paul (1 *Cor.* i.) is dwelling on the humble and, humanly-speaking, powerless, instruments of the propagation of the Gospel :—'*the weak things of the world, chosen by the Most High to confound the strong ;*' thus laying bare as it were the superhuman power which alone could have enabled them to succeed : and that the '*calling*,' therefore, which he speaks of, must mean those thus chosen by their divine Master *to call disciples*. But some learned men, misled by their own ingenuity, have maintained that by the weak and unlearned of whom Paul is speaking, he meant the *converts themselves* ; as if he could have been so silly as to bring forward, as a *proof of divine power*, that the Gospel was received by hardly any but

¹ A similar instance of misapplied and absurd ingenuity, is noticed in a note to Lecture vi. on *Good and Evil Angels*, p. 143.

the lowest and most ignorant ! But this, we are told, he did, in order to rouse the *emulation* of the learned and great ! it being just what would have excited their disgust and scorn.

As for the supposed miracle of walking on the water, that is explained to have been merely *wading* in a shallow part of the lake ! And the multitudes who were fed in the wilderness, were supplied, it seems, by some of their own number, who had brought with them great plenty of provisions, and were induced by the *example* of Jesus and his Apostles, to supply their neighbours !

To represent the whole of the Scripture-narrative as a string of mere fabrications, is a position which, untenable as it is, is a degree less absurd than such theories.

Ingenious explainers of this kind seem to have arisen in the earliest days of the Church. Such, no doubt, were those mentioned by the Apostle Paul as teaching that ‘the Resurrection was past already ;’ and to whom he probably alludes in 1 Cor. xv. For, the expression of ‘the Resurrection’ being ‘*past*,’ implies that they did not *avowedly deny* the statements of the christian teachers, but explained them as a kind of *Myth* or *Parable* ; representing the ‘resurrection’ as being a figurative term, to denote, perhaps, the raising up of mankind from ignorance to knowledge, or from vice to virtue. These men were probably the forerunners and first leaders of those *Docetæ* we read of, who taught (as the Mahometans do to this day) that our Lord did not really suffer death and rise again, but that there was an optical illusion which deceived his enemies, and that the sacred narrative was a kind of *Parable*, containing a hidden meaning, relating to the rejection at first, and triumph afterwards, of Christianity. And in our own days we have been told by an ingenious Divine that ‘the whole Bible is ONE GREAT PARABLE.’

Now, to ordinary men of plain sense, the word *Parable* denotes a fictitious narrative that is *known* and *designed* to be understood not literally but figuratively. But as for a professed narrative of facts *known* to be *understood as such*, and yet, as such, untrue, though capable of being interpreted (as *any* conceivable story might) as a Parable, emblematically containing some secret meaning which few or none would suspect,

—this is what any plain man would be likely to call by a very different name from ‘*Parable*.’¹

When a man has once begun to indulge in the exercise of perverted ingenuity, one can no more guess what extravagance he will next strike out, than one could foresee the course of a mettlesome but blind horse that has broken loose. For instance, perhaps some German professor, with Englishmen for his disciples, may hereafter devise a theory to explain and rationalize the transaction of Elijah’s sacrifice. The prophet, he may suggest, had secretly invented the art of distilling *Alcohol*, or had discovered a spring of *Naphtha* (such as Herodotus describes), which is fluid and colourless like water, but highly inflammable; and then he instructed some accomplices to pour barrels of this seeming water over the wood on the altar; and having also forestalled the invention of *lucifer-matches*, he craftily kindled one, and thus set the pile in a blaze. Such a theory would not be a whit less plausible, or more absurd, than some—such as those above noticed—that are afloat.

‘But, in reference to the point immediately before us, he who is well read in history and in travels, should be warned of the danger (the more on account of the real high importance of such knowledge) of misapplying it;—of supposing that because Political-economy is conversant with *human transactions*, and he is acquainted with so much greater an amount of *human transactions* than the generality of men, he must have an advantage over them in precisely the same degree, in discussing questions of Political-economy. Undoubtedly he *has* a great advantage, if he is careful to keep in view the true principles of the science; but otherwise he may even labour under a *dis*-advantage, by forgetting that (as I have above observed) the kind of transactions which are made most prominent, and occupy the chief space, in the works of historians and travellers, are usually not those of every-day life, with which Political-economy is conversant. It is in the same way that an accurate *military survey* of any district, or a series of sketches accompanying a *picturesque* tour

¹ See *Lectures on the Parables*.

through it, may even serve to mislead one who is seeking for a knowledge of its *agricultural* condition, if he does not keep in mind the different objects which different kinds of survey have in view.

‘Geologists, when commissioning their friends to procure them from any foreign country such specimens as may convey an idea of its geological character, are accustomed to warn them against sending over collections of *curiosities*—i.e. specimens of spars, stalactites, &c., which are accounted, in that country, curious, from being *rarities*, and which consequently convey no correct notion of its general features. What they want is, specimens of the *commonest* strata,—the stones with which the roads are mended, and the houses built, &c. And some fragments of these, which in that country are accounted mere rubbish, they sometimes, with much satisfaction, find *casually adhering* to the specimens sent them as curiosities, and constituting, for *their* object, the most important part of the collection. Histories are in general, to the political economist, what such collections are to the geologist. The casual allusions to common, and what are considered insignificant matters, convey, to him, the most valuable information.

‘An injudicious study of history, then, may even prove an hindrance instead of a help to the forming of right views of political economy. For not only are many of the transactions which are, in the historian’s view, the most important, such as are the least important to the Political-economist, but also a great proportion of them consists of what are in reality the greatest *impediments* to the progress of a society in wealth : viz. wars, revolutions, and disturbances of every kind. It is not in consequence of these, but in spite of them, that society has made the progress which in fact it has made. So that in taking such a survey as history furnishes of the course of events, for instance, for the last eight hundred years, not only do we find little mention of the causes which have so greatly increased national wealth during that period, but what we do chiefly read of is, the *counteracting* causes; especially the wars which have been raging from time to time; to the destruction of capital, and the hindrance of improvement. Now, if a ship had performed a voyage of eight

hundred leagues, and the register of it contained an account chiefly of the contrary winds and currents, and made little mention of favourable gales, we might well be at a loss to understand how she reached her destination; and might even be led into the mistake of supposing that the contrary winds had forwarded her in her course. Yet such is history!

In reference to the study of history, I have elsewhere remarked upon the importance, among the intellectual qualifications for such a study, of a vivid *imagination*,¹—a faculty which, consequently, a skilful narrator must himself possess, and to which he must be able to furnish excitement in others. Some may, perhaps, be startled at this remark, who have been accustomed to consider imagination as having no other office than to *feign* and to falsify. Every faculty is liable to abuse and misdirection, and imagination among the rest; but it is a mistake to suppose that it necessarily tends to pervert the truth of history, and to mislead the judgment. On the contrary, our view of any transaction, especially one that is remote in time or place, will necessarily be imperfect,—generally incorrect,—unless it embrace something more than the bare outline of the occurrences,—unless we have before the mind a lively idea of the scenes in which the events took place, the habits of thought and of feeling of the actors, and all the circumstances connected with the transaction; unless, in short, we can in a considerable degree transport ourselves out of our own Age, and country, and persons, and imagine ourselves the agents or spectators. It is from consideration of all these circumstances that we are enabled to form a right judgment as to the facts which history records, and to derive instruction from it. What we imagine may indeed be merely *imaginary*, that is, unreal; but it may again be what actually does or did exist. To say that imagination, if not regulated by sound judgment and sufficient knowledge, may chance to convey to us false impressions of past events, is only to say that Man is fallible. But such false impressions are even *much the more* likely to take possession of those whose imagination is feeble or uncultivated. They are apt to imagine the things, persons, times, countries, &c., which

¹ See *Lessons on the Mind*.

they read of, as much less different from what they see around them than is really the case.

The practical importance of such an exercise of imagination to a full, and clear, and consequently profitable view of the transactions related in history, can hardly be over-estimated. In respect of the very earliest of all human transactions, it is matter of common remark how prone many are to regard with mingled wonder, contempt, and indignation, the transgression of our first Parents; as if they were not a fair sample of the human race; as if any of us would not, if he had been placed in precisely the same circumstances, have acted as they did. The Corinthians, probably, had perused with the same barren wonder, the history of the backslidings of the Israelites; and needed that Paul should remind them, that these things were written for their example and admonition. And all, in almost every portion of history they read, have need of a corresponding warning, to endeavour to fancy themselves the persons they read of, that they may recognise in the accounts of past times the portraiture of our own. From not putting ourselves in the place of the persons living in past times, and entering fully into all their feelings, we are apt to forget how probable many things might appear, which we know did not take place; and to regard as perfectly chimerical, expectations which we know were not realized, but which, had we lived in those times, we should doubtless have entertained; and to imagine that there was no *danger* of those evils which were, in fact, escaped. We are apt also to make too little allowances for prejudices and associations of ideas, which no longer exist precisely in the same form among ourselves, but which, perhaps, are not more at variance with right reason than others with which ourselves are infected.

‘Some books are to be tasted.’

For various reasons it will often be necessary to ‘taste’ some books which will be, to the most discerning palates, very nauseous, or very insipid. For if you know only what is said, and done, and written, and read, and approved, by the wise and the high-minded, you will remain unacquainted with a portion,—and that, alas! the larger portion—of mankind. The prevailing prejudices and weaknesses of each Age, and Country,

and class of men, and the peculiar kind of sophistry by which each are most liable to be misled, must be understood by any one who would have a correct acquaintance with that Age, &c. And one who would be an efficient instructor of any class of persons, either orally or by his writings, must not only have personal intercourse—which is essential—with those of that class,¹ but must also know something of the books which they approve or delight in. And, again, some very valuable books can be but imperfectly understood without a knowledge of those they were designed to refute.

For such purposes as I have alluded to, one must submit to ‘taste,’ occasionally, much that is disgusting. There was a poem that once passed through a surprising number of editions in a very short time, which was characterized by such dull silliness, combined with malignant bigotry, as to deserve the description applied to one of the Roman Emperors, ‘Mire mingled with Blood.’² But without submitting to read some portion of it, one might have remained ignorant of the degree and extent of the prevalence of bad taste and bad sentiment. And it is important to be aware, what, and from what quarters, are the dangers to religion and virtue. The avowedly profane and profligate works which the present century has produced, are far less noxious than a professedly *religious* Work that is likely to excite horror, loathing, and contempt, in persons of good feeling and good taste.

For various reasons, therefore, it will often be worth while to submit to the task of ‘tasting’ what may create disgust.

There are four books which contain perhaps as much absurd trash as any in existence, which yet no educated man ought to be wholly unacquainted with. (1.) The Jewish *Misna*—the traditional rules for the observance of the Law. It

¹ See *Charge* of 1857.

² One is tempted to apply to such a Work the lines of Æschylus’s *Eumenides*, in which Apollo bids the Furies depart out of his Temple:

Ἐξω, κελεύω, τῶν δὲ δωμάτων τάχος
 Χωρεῖτ’
 Οὔτοι δόμοισι τοῖσδε χρίμπεσθαι πρέπει.
 Ἄλλ’ οὐ καρανιστῆρες ὀφθαλμῶνυχαι
 Δίκαι, σφαγαί τε, σπέρματός τ’ ἀποφθοραὶ
 Παιδῶν, κακοῦ τε χλοῦνις, ἢ δ’ ἀκρωνία,
 Λευσμὸς τε, καὶ μύζουσιν ἀκτισμὸν πολὺν
 Ὑπὸ ῥαχιν παγέντες.

throws great light on the discourses of our Lord, who charges the Jews with having in some instances made 'the Word of God of none effect by their Tradition.'¹ (2.) The *Toldoth Jeschu* [Generation of Jesus] is the account given by the unbelieving Jews, of our Saviour's history. It contains, amidst much blasphemy and nonsense, a most important confirmation of what is recorded by our Evangelists, that the enemies of Jesus admitted the fact of his miracles, though they denied his resurrection. For, if the *facts* had been denied *at the time*, it is inconceivable that a subsequent generation of adversaries should have *admitted* the miracles, and resorted to the hypothesis of Magic. (3.) The *Spurious Gospels*, of which a translation is given in Jones's *Canon of the New Testament*, are a striking and edifying contrast to our sacred books. (4.) The same may be said of *The Koran*; and also of that recent imposture, *The Book of Mormon*. It is very instructive to observe the absurdities men fall into when they set themselves to frame a sham-revelation.

¹ Selections from the *Misna*, with a translation and very useful notes, are to be found in a publication by Dr. Wotton.

ESSAY LI. OF FACTION.

MANY have an opinion not wise, that for a prince to govern his estate,¹ or for a great person to govern his proceedings, according to the respect to factions, is a principal part of policy : whereas, contrariwise,² the chiefest³ wisdom is, either in ordering those things which are general, and wherein men of several factions do nevertheless agree, or in dealing with correspondence to particular persons one by one. But I say not that the consideration of factions is to be neglected. Mean men, in their rising, must adhere ; but great men, that have strength in themselves, were better to maintain themselves indifferent⁴ and neutral ; yet even in beginners, to adhere so moderately, as he be a man of the one faction, which is most passable⁵ with the other, commonly giveth best way. The lower and weaker faction is the firmer in conjunction ; and it is often seen, that a few that are stiff, do tire out a greater number that are more moderate.

When one of the factions is extinguished, the remaining subdivideth ; as the faction between Lucullus and the rest of the nobles of the Senate (which they called *optimates*) held out awhile against the faction of Pompey and Cæsar ; but when the Senate's authority was pulled down, Cæsar and Pompey soon after brake. The faction, or party, of Antonius and Octavius Cæsar against Brutus and Cassius, held out likewise for a time ; but when Brutus and Cassius were overthrown, then, soon after, Antonius and Octavius brake, and subdivided. These examples are of wars, but the same holdeth in private factions ; and, therefore, those that are seconds in factions, do many times, when the faction subdivideth, prove principals ; but many times also they prove cyphers and cashiered ; for many a man's strength is in opposition, and, when that faileth, he groweth out of use. It is commonly

¹ Estate. *State*. See page 146.

² Contrariwise. *On the contrary*. See page 102.

³ Chiefest. *Chief*. 'Not a whit behind the very *chiefest* Apostles.'—2 Cor. xi. 5.

'Antiochus the Great

Built up this city as his *chiefest* seat.'—*Shakespeare*.

⁴ Indifferent. See page 224.

⁵ Passable. *Capable of being received*. 'It is with men as with false money ; one piece is more or less *passable* than another.'—*L'Estrange*.

seen, that men once placed, take in with the contrary faction to that by which they enter: thinking, belike,¹ that they have their first sure, and now are ready for a new purchase. The traitor in faction lightly² goeth away with it, for when matters have stuck long in balancing, the winning of some one man casteth them, and he getteth all the thanks. The even carriage between two factions proceedeth not always of³ moderation, but of a trueness to a man's self, with end to make use of both. Certainly, in Italy, they hold it a little suspect⁴ in popes, when they have often in their mouth, 'Padre commune;'⁵ and take it to be a sign of one that meaneth to refer all to the greatness of his own house. Kings had need beware how they side⁶ themselves, and make themselves as of a faction or party; for leagues within the State are ever pernicious to monarchies; for they raise an obligation paramount to obligation of sovereignty, and make the king 'tanquam unus ex nobis;'⁷ as was to be seen in the league of France. When factions are carried too high and too violently, it is a sign of weakness in princes, and much to the prejudice both of their authority and business. The motions of factions under kings ought to be like the motions (as the astronomers speak) of the inferior orbs, which may have their proper motions, but yet still are quietly carried by the higher motion of 'primum mobile.'⁸

ANNOTATIONS.

Bacon's remark, that a prince ought not to make it his policy to 'govern according to respect to factions,' suggests a strong

¹ Belike. *Probably.* 'That good Earl of Huntingdon, who well esteemed my father; having *belike*, heard some better words of me than I could deserve; made earnest enquiry after me.'—*Bishop Hall.*

² Lightly. *Easily; readily.*

'Believe 't not *lightly* that your son
Will not exceed the common.'—*Shakespeare.*

³ Of. *From.* See page 286.

⁴ Suspect. *Suspicious.*

'Certes, it is to mee *suspect.*'—*Chaucer.*

⁵ 'Common Father.'

⁶ Side. *To take a side.* 'As soon as discontents drove men into *siding.*'

⁷ 'As one of us.'

⁸ 'Primum mobile.' See p. 152.

ground of preference of *hereditary* to elective sovereignty. For when a Chief—whether called King, Emperor, President, or by whatever name—is *elected* (whether for life, or for a term of years), he can hardly avoid being the head of a party. ‘He who is elected will be likely to feel aversion towards those who have voted against him : who may be, perhaps, nearly half of his subjects. And they again will be likely to regard him as an *enemy*, instead of feeling loyalty to him as their prince.

‘And those again who have voted *for* him, will consider him as being under an *obligation* to them, and expect him to show them more favour than to the rest of his subjects ; so that he will be rather the head of a party than the king of a people.

‘Then, too, when the throne is likely to become vacant—that is, when the king is old, or is attacked with any serious illness,—what secret canvassing and disturbance of men’s minds will take place. The king himself will most likely wish that his son, or some other near relative or friend, should succeed him ; and he will employ all his patronage with a view to such an election ; appointing to public offices, not the fittest men, but those whom he can reckon on as voters. And others will be exerting themselves to form a party against him ; so that the country will be hardly ever tranquil, and very seldom well-governed.

‘If, indeed, men were very different from what they are, there might be superior advantages in an elective royalty ; but in the actual state of things, the disadvantages will in general greatly outweigh the benefits.

‘Accordingly most nations have seen the advantage of hereditary royalty, notwithstanding the defects of such a constitution.’¹

‘*Kings had need beware how they side themselves.*’

The observation, that kings who make themselves members of a party, ‘raise an obligation paramount to obligation of sovereignty’—that is, are likely to substitute party-spirit for public-spirit,—is one which applies in a great degree to all partisans, and to all parties, whether political or ecclesiastical.

¹ Lesson I., *On the British Constitution*, pp. 15, 16.

We see in Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* (and the like has been seen in many ages and regions) how much the attachment to the democratic or the oligarchical parties prevailed over Patriotism. And, in religious concerns, attachment to some party will often be found overcoming that to a Church; so that men belonging to different, and even avowedly opposed Churches, will sometimes be found combined in bitter hostility against other members of their own respective Churches, who are not of their religious party.

On any point, indeed, which the State, or the Church, has left as an *open* question, allowing each person to judge and act therein as he may think fit,—on such a point, a man may perhaps find himself differing from some individuals who belong to his own community, and in agreement with some who do not; and he is not precluded from joining with these latter in forwarding some *definite* object in which they agree. For instance, the question of 'Free-trade or Protection' is not involved in the British Constitution, and is one on which loyal subjects may differ. And any one who advocates Free-trade might allowably join with some foreigners of the same opinion, in circulating tracts in favour of it. So also, a member of some Protestant Church might chance to agree with the late Pope Gregory on the subject of Slavery, disagreeing on that point with some fellow-members of his own Church, which has pronounced no decision thereon: and he may, accordingly, join with some Roman-catholics in discountenancing Slavery.

But most watchful care is requisite, to guard against being imperceptibly led on, without any such design originally, into enrolling oneself in a *party, properly so called*, (in Bacon's language, a 'faction'); that is, a combination formed *indefinitely* for the advocacy of certain general principles, and the promotion of a certain *class* of objects, without a distinct specification of each precise object to be arrived at, and of the means to be employed; so that the members of the party do, in fact, place themselves under the guidance of their leaders, without any exact knowledge whither they will be led.¹

¹ See the Essay, 'Of Unity in Religion.' See also, Essay III., 4th Series, § 3, on 'Party Spirit.' See also *Thoughts on the Evangelical Alliance*.

'*The even carriage between two factions proceedeth not always of moderation, but of a trueness to a man's self, with end to make use of both.*'

And thorough-going partizans usually attribute this to *every* one who keeps aloof from Party; or else they suspect him of seeking to set up some *new* party, in which he may be a leader; or they regard him as a whimsical Being, who *differs in opinion* from everybody.

A zealous anti-Calvinist at Oxford denounced as Calvinistic a series of Discourses delivered there some years ago, because they were *not* Arminian: and when those same Discourses were afterwards published, a Reviewer spoke of the author as Arminian because he was *not* a Calvinist: 'since every one,' he said, 'must be supposed to be either the one or the other.'

A large portion of mankind enrol themselves in the ranks of a party, to be saved the trouble of examining for themselves each of a great number of particular points. They like to have a ready-made *set* of opinions; like a *lot* of goods at an auction. And they conclude that others must do the like. Moreover, Man is a *classifying* animal. It is a convenience to be able to refer each individual to a Class, whose name describes him, instead of going through all the particulars of his opinions. And one who cannot be so described,—though perhaps he does not differ more from his neighbours than many of them do from each other—is an *inconvenient* individual;—a kind of *odd volume* on a library-table, for which we cannot find a place on any of the shelves. He is one who refuses to say 'I am of Paul, or I, of Apollos, or I, of Cephas, or, of Luther, or Calvin, or Arminius.' And those, therefore, who prefer convenience to accuracy, will be likely to place him in the ranks of some Party, according to their fancy; or else they will denounce him as 'eccentric,' and affecting 'singularity.'

And as I have observed above (in the Annotations on the Essay on 'Custom') that a prudent man who is no partizan will never trust those who decidedly belong to a party, so, these will never fully trust any one who does *not*. They may perhaps gladly co-operate with him in some particular matter in which he agrees with them: but they cannot rely on him for going along with them throughout. In some other matter he may

perhaps be opposed to them ; because he means to use his own judgment in each case ; and what the decision of that judgment may be, they cannot foresee with any certainty. They set him down therefore as a man who may chance to be sometimes useful, but who is 'one not to be depended on.' And they usually attribute to him, as Bacon has observed, motives of pure self-interest.

From one or other of the above-mentioned causes, he is likely to be regarded by the most zealous party-men, with at least as much hostility as those of an opposite party. And accordingly, Thucydides, in describing the party-contests at Corcyra and other Greek States, remarks that 'those who held a middle course were destroyed by both parties.'

And it is remarkable that party-spirit tends so much to lower the moral standard, that it makes men regard with less abhorrence what is wrong, not only on their own side, but even on the opposite. Their feelings towards those of the opposed party are very much those of a soldier towards the soldiers of the hostile army. He fires at them for *that* reason *alone*, and expects that they should fire at *him*. If they fight bravely, or if they out-manceuvre him, he admires their courage or their skill. He does not think the worse of them for reckless plundering, ravaging, and slaughtering, just as he would do in their place, and as he does, on the opposite side. Even so, the most thorough-going partizans attribute to every one who is, or is supposed to be (often without any good grounds) a member of the opposite party, such conduct as is in reality unjustifiable, without thinking at all the worse of him for it. It is only what they would do in his place : and though they dislike him for *being of the opposite party*, they dislike him for *nothing else*.

And as there is often a strong resemblance in character between the soldiers of two hostile armies, so, those whom some perhaps slight circumstance has enrolled in the ranks of opposite parties, will often be found to be very much alike in the most essential points of personal character. Thus, two similar mountain-streams near the summit of the great mountain-ridges which divide Europe, will sometimes be separated by a small fragment of rock, which sends the waters of the one into the Atlantic, and of the other into the Mediterranean.

And not only are the *feelings* of zealous party-men hostile

to one of moderate views, who keeps clear of opposite extremes, but their *moral-judgment* also—such as it is—condemns him. If, for instance, he has been raised to some high office without solicitation, and unconditionally, and afterwards refuses to vote through thick and thin with the Party of the Ministry that appointed him, against his own judgment, and without any regard for justice and the public good, he is likely to be denounced as an ungrateful traitor. And if he advocates some enlargement of popular rights, and also some wholesome restrictions, he will be reproached with ‘*inconsistency* ;’ just as the Satyr, in the Fable, rebukes the inconsistency of the traveller, whose breath warmed his fingers, and cooled his porridge.

The effects of party-spirit in lowering the moral standard are gradual, and usually rather slow. But it often happens, on the occasion of some violent party-contest, that an *apparently sudden* change will take place in men’s characters ; and we are surprised by an unexpected outbreak of unscrupulous baseness, cruel injustice, and extravagant folly. In such cases, however, there can be little doubt that the evil dispositions thus displayed were lurking in the breasts of the individuals before, unknown by themselves and by those around them ; and are merely called into activity by the occasion ; even as a storm of wind raises the dust which it did not create. According to the proverb,¹

‘The pond that when stirred does muddy appear,
Had mud *at the bottom* when still and clear.’

¹ See *Proverbs and Precepts*.

ESSAY LII. OF CEREMONIES AND RESPECTS.¹

HE that is only real had need have exceeding great parts of virtue, as the stone had need to be rich that is set without foil; but if a man mark it well, it is in praise and commendation of men as it is in gettings and gains; for the proverb is true, 'That light gains make heavy purses,' for light gains come thick, whereas great come but now and then; so it is true, that small matters win great commendation, because they are continually in use and in note, whereas the occasion of any great virtue cometh but on festivals. Therefore it doth much add to a man's reputation, and is (as Queen Isabella said) like perpetual letters commendatory, to have good forms. To attain them, it almost sufficeth not to despise them; for so shall a man observe them in others, and let him trust himself with the rest; for if he labour too much to express them, he shall lose their grace, which is to be natural and unaffected. Some men's behaviour is like a verse, wherein every syllable is measured. How can a man comprehend great matters, that breaketh his mind too much to small observations?² Not to use ceremonies at all, is to teach others not to use them again, and so diminish respect to himself; especially they are not to be omitted to strangers and formal natures; but the dwelling upon them, and exalting them above the moon, is not only tedious, but both diminish the faith and credit of him that speaks; and, certainly, there is a kind of conveying of effectual and imprinting³ passages amongst compliments, which is of singular use, if a man can hit upon it. Amongst a man's peers a man shall be sure of familiarity, and therefore it is good a little to keep state; amongst

¹ Ceremonies and respects. *Conventional forms of politeness, and rules of etiquette.*

'The sauce to meat is *ceremony*;
Meeting were bare without it.'—*Shakespeare.*

'What art thou, thou idle *ceremony*?

.
Art thou aught else but place, degree and form?'—*Shakespeare.*

'The Duke's carriage to the gentlemen was of fair *respects*.'—*Wotton.*

² Observations. *Observances.* 'He freed the christian Church from the external observation.'—*White.*

³ Imprinting. *Impressive.*

a man's inferiors one shall be sure of reverence, and therefore it is good a little to be familiar. He that is too much in any thing, so that he giveth another occasion of satiety, maketh himself cheap. To apply one's self to others is good, so it be with demonstration that a man doth it upon¹ regard and not upon facility. It is a good precept generally in seconding another, yet to add somewhat of one's own; as if you will grant his opinion, let it be with some distinction; if you will follow his motion, let it be with condition; if you allow his counsel, let it be with alleging farther reason. Men had need beware how they be too perfect in compliments; for be they never so sufficient² otherwise, their enviers will be sure to give them that attribute, to the disadvantage of their greater virtues. It is loss also in business to be too full of respects, or to be too curious³ in observing times and opportunities. Solomon saith, 'He that considereth the wind shall not sow, and he that looketh to the clouds shall not reap.'⁴ A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds. Men's behaviour should be like their apparel, not too strait or point device,⁵ but free for exercise or motion.

ANTITHETA ON CEREMONIES AND RESPECTS.

PRO.

'Si et in verbis vulgo paremus, quidni in habitu, et gestu?

'If we accommodate ourselves to the vulgar in our speech, why not also in our deportment?'

'Virtus et prudentia sine punctis, velut peregrinae linguae sunt; nam vulgo non intelliguntur.

'Virtue and wisdom without forms of politeness are strange languages, for they are not ordinarily understood.'

'Puncti translatio sunt virtutis in linguam vernaculam.

'Forms are the translation of virtue into the vulgar tongue.'

CONTRA.

'Quid deformius, quam scenam in vitam transferre?

'What can be more disgusting than to transfer the stage into common life?'

'Magis placent cerussatae buccae, et calamistrata coma, quam cerussati et calamistrati mores.

'Rouged cheeks and curled hair are less offensive than rouged and curled manners.'

¹ Upon. In consequence of. See page 490.

² Sufficient. Able. 'Who is sufficient for these things?'—2 Cor. ii. 16.

³ Curious. Exact; precise. 'Both these senses embrace their objects with a more curious discrimination.'—Holder.

⁴ Eccles. xi. 4.

⁵ Point device. Extremely exact (with the nicety and precision of a stitch [French *point*] devised or made with the needle). 'Everything about you should demonstrate a careless desolation; but you are rather *point de vise* in your accoutrements, as loving yourself, than the lover of another.'—Shakespeare.

ANNOTATIONS.

‘He that is only real had need have exceeding great parts of virtue.’

To attach as much importance (which a good many do) or more, to refined and graceful manners, than to more substantial qualities ;—to prefer, as it were, a Pumpkin to a Pine-apple, because it has a smoother coat—does, certainly, show a frivolous turn, and a lack of wisdom. But there is no wisdom in needlessly incurring the ill will or contempt of that numerous class, the frivolous and unwise.

‘Not to use ceremonies at all, is to teach others not to use them again.’

Good manners are a part of good morals ; and when form is too much neglected, true politeness suffers diminution : then we are obliged to bring some back ; or we find the want of them. The same holds good in a higher department. Mankind are not formed to live without ceremony and form : the ‘inward spiritual grace’ is very apt to be lost without the ‘external visible sign.’ Many are continually setting up for the expulsion of ceremonies from this or that ; and often with advantage, when they have so multiplied as to grow burdensome ; but, if ever they have carried this too far, they have been forced to bring back some ceremonies.

Upon the whole, we may conclude that *ceremony* and form of every kind derive their necessity from our imperfection. If we were perfectly spiritual, we might worship God without any form at all, without even uttering words ; as we are not, it is a folly to say, ‘One may be just as pious on one day as another, in one place, or posture, as another,’ &c., I answer, angels may ; Man cannot. Again, if we were all perfectly benevolent, good-tempered, attentive to the gratifying of others, &c., we might dispense with all the forms of good-breeding ; as it is, we cannot ; we are not enough of heroes to fight without discipline. Selfishness will be sure to assail us if

we once let the barriers be broken down. At the same time it is evident from what has been said, that the *higher our nature is carried, the less form we need.*

But though we may deservedly congratulate society on being able to dispense with this or that ceremony, do not let us be in a hurry to do so, till we are sure we *can* do without it. It is taking away crutches, to cure the gout. The opposite extreme of substituting the external form for the thing signified, is not more dangerous or more common than the neglect of that form. It is all very well to say, 'There is no use in bidding good-morrow or good-night, to those who know I wish it; of sending one's love, in a letter, to those who do not doubt it,' &c. All this sounds very well in theory, but it will not do for practice. Scarce any friendship, or any politeness, is so strong as to be able to subsist without any external supports of this kind; and it is even better to have too much form than too little.

It is worth observing, in reference to conventional forms, that the 'vernacular tongue,' in which the forms of civility are expressed, differs in different times and places. For instance, in Spain it is a common form of civility to ask a man to dinner, and for the other to reply, 'Sure you would not think of such a thing.' To accept a first or second invitation would be as great a blunder as if, among us, any one who signed himself 'your obedient servant' should be taken literally, and desired to perform some menial office. If a Spanish gentleman really means to ask you to dinner, he repeats the invitation a *third* time; and *then* he is to be understood literally.

Serious errors may, of course, arise in opposite ways, by not understanding aright what is and is not to be taken as a mere complimentary form.

ESSAY LIIL. OF PRAISE.

PRAISE is the reflection of virtue: but it is as the glass, or body, which giveth the reflection; if it be from the common people, it is commonly false and naught,¹ and rather followeth vain persons than virtuous: for the common people understand not many excellent virtues: the lowest virtues draw praise from them, the middle virtues work in them astonishment or admiration; but of the highest virtues they have no sense or perceiving² at all; but shows, and ‘species virtutibus similes’³ serve best with them. Certainly, fame is like a river, that beareth up things light and swollen, and drowns things weighty and solid; but if persons of quality and judgment concur, then it is (as the scripture saith) ‘Nomen bonum instar unguenti fragrantis;’⁴ it filleth all round about, and will not easily away;⁵ for the odours of ointments are more durable than those of flowers.

There be so many false points of praise, that a man may justly hold it in suspect.⁶ Some praises proceed merely of flattery; and if it be an ordinary flatterer, he will have certain common attributes, which may serve every man; if he be a cunning flatterer, he will follow the arch-flatterer, which is a man’s self, and wherein a man thinketh best of himself, therein the flatterer will uphold him most: but if he be an impudent flatterer, look wherein a man is conscious to himself that he is most defective, and is most out of countenance in himself, that will the flatterer entitle him to, perforce, ‘Spreta conscientia.’⁷ Some praises come of good wishes and respects, which is a form due in civility to kings and great persons, ‘laudando præcipere;’⁸ when by telling them what they are, they represent to them

¹ Naught. *Worthless; despicable.* See page 301.

² Perceiving. *Perception.*

³ ‘Appearances like virtues.’

⁴ ‘A good name is like a fragrant ointment.’—*Eccles. vii. 1.*

⁵ Away. *Pass away.*

‘I have a pain upon my forehead here.

Why that’s with watching; ’twill away again.’—*Shakespeare.*

⁶ Suspect. *Suspicion.*

⁷ ‘Despising conscience.’

⁸ ‘To instruct by praising.’

what they should be. Some men are praised maliciously to their hurt, thereby to stir envy and jealousy towards them; ‘*pessimum genus inimicorum laudantium*;’¹ insomuch as it was a proverb amongst the Grecians, that ‘He that was praised to his hurt, should have a push² rise upon his nose;’ as we say, that a blister will rise upon one’s tongue that tells a lie. Certainly moderate praise, used with opportunity, and not vulgar, is that which doeth the good. Solomon saith, ‘He that praiseth his friend aloud, rising early, it shall be to him no better than a curse.’³ Too much magnifying of man or matter doth irritate contradiction, and procure envy and scorn. To praise a man’s self, cannot be decent, except it be in rare cases; but to praise a man’s office or profession, he may do it with good grace, and with a kind of magnanimity. The cardinals of Rome, which are theologues,⁴ and friars, and schoolmen, have a phrase of notable⁵ contempt and scorn towards civil business: for they call all temporal business of wars, embassages, judicature, and other employments, sherrerie, which is under-sherriffries, as if they were but matters for under-sheriffs and catch-poles; though many times those under-sherriffries do more good than their high speculations. St. Paul, when he boasts of himself, doth oft interlace, ‘I speak like a fool;’⁶ but speaking of his calling, he saith, ‘*Magnificabo apostolatium meum*.’⁷

ANTITHETA ON PRAISE.

PRO.

‘*Virtutis radii reflexi laudes.*

‘*Praises are the reflected rays of virtue.*’

‘*Laus honor is est, ad quem liberis suffragiis pervenitur.*

‘*Praise is that kind of honor which is conferred by free votes.*

‘*Honores diverse a diversis politiis*

CONTRA.

‘*Fama deterior judex, quam nuncia.*

‘*Common fame is a bad messenger, but a worse judge.*’

‘*Fama veluti fluvius, levius attollit, solida mergit.*

‘*Fame, like a river, bears up what is light, and sinks what is solid.*’

‘*Infimarum virtutum apud vulgus*

¹ ‘The worst kind of enemies are those who praise.’

² Push. *A pustule; a pimple.*

⁴ Theologue. *A theologian; a Divine.*

‘*A theologian more by need than genial bent.*’—*Dryden.*

⁵ Notable. *Remarkable.* ‘And they had then a notable prisoner.’—*Matt.* xxvii. 16.

⁶ 2 Cor. xi. 23.

⁷ ‘I magnify mine office.’—*Romans* xi. 13.

³ *Proverbs* xxvii. 14.

conferuntur; sed laudes ubique sunt libertatis.

'Honors are conferred differently in different governments; but praises everywhere by popular suffrage.'

* * * * *

'Ne mireris, si vulgus verius loquatur, quam honoratiores; quia etiam tutius loquitur.'

'It is no wonder that the vulgar sometimes speak more truly than those of high place, because they speak more safely.'

laus est, mediarum admiratio, supremarum sensus nullus.

'The lowest of the virtues the vulgar praise; the middle ones they admire; of the highest they have no perception.'

ANNOTATIONS.

'If it be from the common people, it is commonly false and naught.'

It was remarked by a sensible man, that any one who has been 'raised from the ranks' (as the phrase is) about middle-life, to a high station, is in danger of being over-sensitive to public opinion;—too anxiously watchful of what is said of him by this, that, and t'other set of men, and thence liable to be blown about to and fro, by the breath of popular applause and censure, from various quarters. A man, on the contrary, who has, *from his youth up*, occupied a high station, will have been hardened,—sometimes perhaps even too much hardened,—against all this; and having been always used to live, as it were, in public, and to have all his movements commented on with praise or dispraise, will have acquired a habit of regarding public opinion with something of the indifference which is the proverbial effect of long familiarity.

The one of these needs to be warned against too much attention, the other, against too much inattention, to what is said of him. [See the Annotation on 'Nobility.']

'The common people understand not many excellent virtues: the lowest virtues draw praise from them, the middle virtues work in them astonishment or admiration, but of the highest virtues they have no sense or perceiving at all.'

What a pregnant remark is this! By the lowest of the virtues he means probably such as hospitality, liberality, gratitude, good-humoured courtesy, and the like; and these he says the common run of mankind are accustomed to *praise*. Those which they *admire*, such as daring courage, and firm fidelity to friends, or to the cause or party one has espoused, are what he ranks in the next highest place. But the most elevated virtues of all, such as disinterested and devoted public spirit, thorough-going even-handed justice, and disregard of unpopularity when duty requires, of these he says the vulgar have usually no notion. And he might have gone further; for it often happens that a large portion of mankind not only do not praise or admire the highest qualities, but even censure and despise them. Cases may occur in which, though you may obtain the high approbation of a very few persons of the most refined and exalted moral sentiments, you must be prepared to find the majority (even of such as are not altogether bad men) condemning you as unnatural, unkind, faithless, and not to be depended on; or deriding you as eccentric, crotchety, fanciful, or absurdly scrupulous.¹

Mr. Pitt, it is reported, said of the celebrated Mr. Wilberforce, that he was 'always to be had, *except when he was wanted*.' Whether this particular anecdote is true or not, there can be no doubt that many a Statesman will think lightly of the support afforded to measures, or to persons, that are sufficiently recommended by their intrinsic goodness; but when the object is to screen the guilty, or (as Thucydides expresses it) to 'carry through by a plausible speech some objectionable measure,'² then it is that the support of a man of high character is much 'wanted;' and the scruples which prevent his affording it, are likely to cause much vexation. 'Heaven forbid, Sir,' (says Davy to Justice Shallow), 'but a

¹ See *Lessons on Morals*.

² Εὐπρεπεία λόγου ἐπιφθόνως τι διαπράξασθαι.

knave should have some countenance at his friend's request. An honest man, Sir, *is able to speak for himself*, when a knave is not. I have served your Worship truly, Sir, these eight years; and if I cannot once or twice in a quarter bear out a knave against an honest man, I have very little credit with your Worship.¹

And such a disparagement of the highest virtues as has been above described, is the more likely to occur, because there are many cases in which the same conduct may result *either* from the very highest motive, or from a base one; and then, those of the noblest character, and who are also cautious and intelligent, will judge from your general conduct and character *which* motive to assign; while those who are themselves strangers to the highest principle, will at once attribute your acts to the basest. For example, if you shrink from some daring or troublesome undertaking which is also unjustifiable, this may be either from cowardice or indolence, or from scrupulous integrity; and the worse motive will be at once assigned by those who have no notion of the better. If you are tolerant in religion, this *may* be either from utter carelessness, like Gallio's, or from a perception of the true character of the Gospel: and those who want this latter, will be sure to attribute to you at once the other. If you decline supporting a countryman against foreigners when they have right on their side, or a friend against a stranger, this *may* be either from indifference to your country, or your friend, or from a strong love of justice; and those who have but dim views of justice will at once set you down as unpatriotic or unfriendly. And so in many other cases.

If, accordingly, you refuse to defend, or to deny, or to palliate, the faults of those engaged in a good cause, and if you are ready to bear testimony to whatever there may be that is right on the opposite side, you will be regarded by many as treacherous, or lukewarm, or inconsistent. If you advocate toleration for an erroneous faith, and protest against forcing, or entrapping, or bribing any persons into the profession of a true one, many will consider you as yourself either tainted with error, or indifferent about religious truth. If, again, you con-

¹ Second Part of *King Henry IV.*, Act v.

sider a seat in Parliament, or any other place you may occupy, or the power of appointing another to such a place, as a sacred trust for the public service, and, therefore, requiring sometimes the sacrifice of private friendship,—if you do justice to an opponent against a friend, or to a worse man (when he happens to have right on his side) against a better,—if you refuse to support your friends, or those you have been accustomed to act with, or those to whom you have a personal obligation, when they are about doing something that is wrong,—if you decline making application on behalf of a friend to those who would expect you, in return, to place your votes and interest at their disposal, whether your own judgment approved of their measures or not,—in these and other such cases, you will be perhaps more blamed or despised by the generality, than commended or admired. For, party-men will usually pardon a zealous advocate of their party for many great *faults*, more readily than they will pardon the *virtue* of standing quite aloof from party, and doing strict justice to all. It will often happen, therefore, that when a man of very great real excellence does acquire great and general esteem, four-fifths of this will have been bestowed on the *minor* virtues of his character; and four-fifths of his admirers will have either quite overlooked the most truly admirable of his qualities, or else regarded them as pardonable weaknesses.

You should guard, then, against the opposite dangers of either lowering *your own* moral standard to the level of some of your neighbours, or judging too hardly of *them*. Your general practical rule should be, to *expect more of yourself than of others*. Of course it is not meant that a man is to think over-highly of himself and ‘despise others.’ He is not to think his *conduct* better than others, only his *capabilities*. A man who feels himself capable of generous and exalted conduct (I do not mean, feels that he shall always act thus,—for who dares promise himself this?—but who feels that it is not beyond his conception, or unnatural to him), when he measures others by his own standard, and is disappointed with them, will remember that every man shall be judged ‘according to that he hath, and not according to that he hath not.’ He will feel that more is required of him, as being placed in a higher walk of duty; and will thus be even the less satisfied with his conformity to so lofty a standard.

This is a point which it is important to dwell on, because, besides those who (as Bacon has elsewhere expressed it) are, intellectually, 'soaring angels,' and morally, 'crawling serpents;' there are also some whose moral superiority does not *keep pace* with their intellectual; who are indeed much better men than the common run, but yet not so much above them in that, as they are in intelligence. Such a person has been compared to the Image in the King of Babylon's dream, with a *head* of gold, and a *breast* of silver—a precious metal indeed, but inferior to that of the head.

Although, then, a man of elevated character will be humbled by his frequent failures, yet, as a fair and due sense of dignity, which arises from a consciousness of superior station, is not only right but needful, in a gentleman, a peer, or a king, to make them fill their stations gracefully; so it is here: that proper sense of his own moral dignity is necessary for a great and generous disposition, if he would act up to his character. The excess thereof will be checked by habits of true piety, which cannot but make him feel his own littleness in the strongest manner; and by continually asking himself 'Who made thee to differ from another? or, What hast thou that thou didst not receive?' he will be guarded against despising his inferiors. For, generous and ungenerous pride are not only different (as all would allow), but, in most points, opposite. A man of the former character makes allowances for others which he will not make for himself; the latter, allowances for himself, which he will not, for others: he is ready enough to think that this, and that, is not good enough for him; but the other thinks a *base action* not good enough for him, and does not regard his superiority as a privilege to act in a manner which, in his view, would degrade him from it; and, while doing the most generous actions himself, as things of course, he will make the readiest allowance for others' deficiencies. He will do good without calculating upon much gratitude; yet will be grateful, with most generous ardour, himself. To take any unfair advantages, or even to take *all* fair ones—to press his rights to the utmost—to press close to the limits of what is wrong, and anxiously consider whether he may be *allowed* to do this, or omit that,—he disdains, and would feel degraded by it. Of the virtues of such a man as this, the vulgar have indeed no perception.

He that assails error because it *is* error, without respect of

persons, must be prepared for a storm from the party who were fanning him with the gentle breath of praise, so long as he had been dealing with the errors of the party opposed to them. They say with the rat to the mouse (in a ludicrous poem, on a house much infested with rats and mice, into which a cat had been brought),—

‘Said the other, this cat, if she murder a *rat*,
Must needs be a very great sinner,
But to feed upon *mice* can’t be counted a vice
I *myself* like a mouse for my dinner.’

It should be added, however, for the credit of human nature, that, by a steady adherence to high principles, a man is likely—in the long run, though not speedily,—to create such a public confidence as will give him an influence beyond that of other men, of equal or of superior ability.

The following anecdote may be relied on: When the Poor-law-amendment Bill was going through the House of Commons, Lord Althorp, who was then the ministerial leader in the House, was called on to answer a strong objection which was raised to one of the clauses. He rose and said that ‘this very objection had occurred to himself; and that he had thereupon stated it to the framers of the Bill, who had given an answer which completely met the objection. But *what that answer was*, he was sorry to say, he *could not at that moment recollect*; though he assured the House that it was *perfectly satisfactory*.’ This satisfied every one, such was the confidence felt in his judgment and his integrity: the clause was allowed to pass without further opposition!

‘*There are so many false points of praise.*’

That censure and commendation should in so many instances be indiscriminate, can surprise no one who recollects how rare a quality discrimination is, and how much better it suits indolence, as well as ignorance, to lay down a rule, than to ascertain the exceptions to it.

‘*Some praises come of good wishes.*’

The word ‘macarize’ has been adopted by some Oxford-men who are familiar with Aristotle, to supply a word wanting in our

language. 'Felicitate' and 'congratulate' are (in actual usage) confined to *events*. A man is congratulated on his marriage, but not on having a good wife. And sometimes 'I envy you' is used, when it is understood that there is no envy in the bad (which is the proper) sense. I believe the French sometimes say 'Je vous en fais mes compliments.' It may be said that men are admired for what they *are*, commended for what they *do*, and macarized for what they *have*.

Of the 'praises that come of good wishes,' none have such influence as the daily droppings of domestic flattery—to use the word flattery in the sense of undue praise merely. *Laudari a laudato viro*¹ is what every one would prize most; but other praises may make up in tale what they want in weight.

It has been observed, however, by some writer, that 'no one is a hero to his valet.' This may be sometimes from the incapacity (above noticed) of the vulgar for appreciating the highest qualities. The valet has opportunities of knowing that his master needs to eat, drink, and sleep, &c., like other mortals; and perhaps he has seen him subject to sickness and other human infirmities. Cæsar is represented by Shakespere as disparaged by those who remembered him 'shaking in an ague,' and calling out 'Give me some drink, Titinius! like a sick girl.'

Perhaps, too, the valet has found his own superiority in some of the minor details of every-day life. He is more handy in packing up a trunk, or setting a razor; and more skilful in the arrangements for a journey, &c. And of the higher qualifications of the hero, he may have perhaps ['sensus nullus'] no perception.

With some minds, again, mere *familiarity* produces its proverbial effect. The highest intellectual and moral qualities may cease to excite any great admiration in one who has become so thoroughly *used* to them as to look for their manifestation as a matter of course: while any imperfection, on the other hand, strikes him by its contrast, even as 'the smallest speck is seen on snow.' It is at a meteor or a comet that men gaze with awe and admiration, who feel little or none at the splendid spectacle of the sun, moon, and stars, which they are used to. And to view all such objects with indifference, was considered

¹ To be praised by one who is himself thought praiseworthy.

by Horace—no very profound philosopher—as a mark of wisdom.

The above is the description of the most unthinking. Those, again, who are a little—and *but* a little—more reflective, finding that most people impute to them, as a matter of course, an over-veneration for any eminent person they may be connected with, are not unlikely to think that they cannot go too far in the opposite direction, and (as was observed in the ‘Annotations’ on Essays IV. and XXXVIII.) rush into the contrary extreme. And this dread of partiality, combined with the usual effect of familiarity, sometimes leads to an undue depreciation of what is excellent.

In one of the comedies of the early part of last century (many of which, though in bad taste, have considerable wit, and some wisdom) a man is represented complaining to a friend how desperately he is in love with a lady, in spite of *her faults*; though he has noted them, and written a list of them, which he has dwelt on till quite familiar with them; and still, he complained, he was more and more in love. ‘Oh, I will tell you a remedy,’ says the other: ‘marry her; get as *familiar with her virtues*, as you are with her faults; and your passion will be cured.’

Hence, perhaps, partly, it may be that the proverb is sometimes applicable, of ‘a prophet being without honour in his own country.’

‘Certainly moderate praise, used with opportunity, and not vulgar, is that which doeth the good.’

It is worth remarking that praise is one of the things which almost everyone must *wish* for, and be glad of, yet which it is not allowable to *seek* for as an end. To obtain the approbation of the wise and good, by doing what is right, simply *because* it is right, is most gratifying to the natural and allowable wish to escape the censure and gain the approbation of our fellow-creatures; but to make this gratification, either wholly or partly, our object—to hold up a finger on purpose (and for that *sole* purpose) to gain the applause of the whole world, is unjustifiable.

A well-known writer once acknowledged his having said what

he did from 'a wish to be orthodox.' Now, such a *wish*—merely as a wish—is quite natural and allowable ; for almost everyone would prefer being on the side of the majority ; and this will of course be, by the majority, accounted orthodoxy. But he evidently meant that he was *practically influenced* by the wish,—that he *acted with a view* to the reputation for orthodoxy, and did not merely welcome it if it came spontaneously while he was aiming simply at truth. And accordingly he had his reward, in becoming a great party-leader ; and he abandoned truth.

'No man can serve two masters ;' not because they are necessarily at variance, but because they are *two*, and do not necessarily draw the same way. Even worldly profit (Mammon) will often be secured by the same conduct as would be dictated by a regard for divine favour ; for 'honesty is in general the best policy.' But *sometimes* the two will pull different ways ; and *then* it is that it will appear *which* master a man is serving. The desire of Truth must reign supreme, and everything else be welcomed only if coming in her train.

Deference for the (supposed) wise and good, and love of *approbation*, are two very distinct things, though in practice very difficult to be distinguished. The former may be felt towards those whom we never can meet with,—who perhaps were dead, ages before we were born, and survive only in their writings. It may be misplaced, or excessive ; but it is quite different from the desire of their applause or sympathy, or dread of their displeasure or contempt. A man's desire to find himself in agreement with Aristotle, or Bacon, or Locke, or Paley, &c., whether reasonable or unreasonable, can have nothing to do with their *approbation* of him. But when we are glad to concur with some living friends, whom we think highly of, and dread to differ from, then it is very difficult to decide how far this feeling is the *presumption formed by our judgment* in favour of the correctness of their views, and how far it is the desire of their *approbation* and sympathy, and dread of the reverse. It is the desire of personal approbation,—the excessive care concerning what is thought of ourselves,—that we are bound so severely to check.

There is a distinction (alluded to above) between the love of *admiration* and the love of *commendation*, that is worth remarking. The tendency of the love of commendation is, chiefly, to make a man *exert* himself; of the love of admiration, to make him *puff* himself. The love of admiration leads to fraud, much more than the love of commendation; but, on the other hand, the latter is much more likely to spoil our good actions by the substitution of an inferior motive. And if we would guard against this, we must set ourselves resolutely to act as if we cared neither for praise nor censure,—for neither the bitter nor the sweet; and in time a man gets hardened. And this will always be the case, more or less, through God's help, if we will but persevere, and *persevere from a right motive*. One gets hardened, as the Canadians do to walking in snowshoes [raquets]; at first a man is almost crippled with the 'mal au raquet'—the pain and swelling of the feet; but the prescription is, to *go on* walking in them, as if you felt nothing at all; and in a few days you do feel nothing.

Much eloquence and ingenuity is often exerted, in descanting on the propriety of not being wholly indifferent to the opinions formed of us—the impossibility of eradicating the regard for approbation—and the folly of attempting it, or pretending to it, &c. Now, this is very true. The propensity to desire to gain approval and escape censure, we are not called upon to extirpate (that being, I conceive, impossible); but our care and pains are better bestowed in *keeping under* the feeling than in *eradicating* it. It must be treated like the grass on a lawn which you wish to keep in good order: you neither attempt, nor wish, to *destroy* the grass; but you *mow* it down from time to time, as close as you possibly can, well trusting that there will be quite enough left, and that it will be sure to grow again.

One difficulty in acting upon this principle is, that it is often even a duty to seek the good opinion of others, not as an *ultimate* object for its own sake, but for the sake of influencing them for their own benefit, and that of others. 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' But we are to watch and analyse the *motives* even of actions which we are sure are in themselves right. 'Take heed that ye do not

your alms before men, to be seen of them.' And this is a kind of vigilance which human nature is always struggling to escape. One class of men are satisfied so long as they *do* what is justifiable;—what *may* be done from a good motive, and, when so done, *would* be right, and which therefore may be satisfactorily defended. Another class—the ascetic—are for cutting off everything that *may* be a snare. They have heard of 'the deceitfulness of riches,' and so they vow poverty; which is less trouble than *watching their motives* in gaining, and in spending, money. And so on with the rest. But if we would cut off all temptations, we must cut off our heads at once.

The praise of men is not the test of our praiseworthiness; nor is their censure; but either should set us upon *testing* ourselves.

It is to be observed that, in some cases, censure is equivalent to high praise. If, for instance, those who wish to perpetuate some abuse, fiercely assail one who advocates needful reform, or if revolutionists of any description decry some defender of law and order, this affords a presumption that he is a formidable champion. And the more pains they take to assure us that his arguments deserve nothing but contempt, the more they prove that they themselves do not feel any. Again, if any defender of the truth of Christianity, who refuses to join any *Party* in the Church, is thereupon denounced as unsound by zealous party-men, this adds to the force of his arguments, by indicating that the belief he professes is sincere, and not assumed for the sake of popularity. And if, again, some violent and injudicious advocates of a good cause are doing it harm instead of good, so that it is needful for a wise and moderate man to repudiate all connexion with them, no disclaimer on *his* part will have so much weight, as their vehemently reviling him.

ESSAY LIV. OF VAIN GLORY.

IT was prettily devised of Æsop, the fly sat upon the axle-tree of the chariot wheel, and said, 'What a dust do I raise !' So are there some vain persons, that, whatsoever goeth alone, or moveth upon greater means, if they have never so little hand in it, they think it is they that carry it. They that are glorious¹ must needs be factious ; for all bravery² stands upon comparisons. They must needs be violent, to make good their own vaunts ; neither can they be secret ; and therefore not effectual ; but, according to the French proverb, '*beaucoup de bruit, peu de fruit*'—much bruit,³ little fruit. Yet, certainly, there is use of this quality in civil affairs : where there is an opinion and fame to be created, either of virtue or greatness, these men are good trumpeters. Again, as Titus Livius⁴ noteth, in the case of Antiochus and the Ætolians, there are sometimes great effects of⁵ cross lies, as if a man that negotiates between two princes, to draw them to join in a war against a third, doth extol the forces of either of them above measure, the one to the other : and sometimes he that deals between man and man raiseth his own credit with both, by pretending greater interest that he hath in either ; and in these, and the like kinds, it often falls out, that somewhat is produced of nothing ; for lies are sufficient to breed opinion, and opinion brings on substance.

In military commanders and soldiers, vain glory is an essential point ; for as iron sharpens iron, so by glory⁶ one courage sharpeneth another. In cases of great enterprise upon⁷ charge

¹ Glorious. *Boastful*. See page 490.

² Bravery. *Ostentation*. See page 409.

³ Bruit. *Noise ; report*. (This proverb has its parallel in the English one, 'Great cry and little wool.') 'All that hear the *bruit* of thee.'—*Nahum* iii. 19.

⁴ Vid. *Liv.* xxxvii. 48.

⁵ Of. *From*. See page 286.

⁶ Glory. *Vaunting ; boastfulness*. 'I will punish the *glory* of his high looks.'—*Isaiah* x.

'On death-beds some in conscious *glory* lie,
Since of the doctor in the mode they die.'—*Young*.

⁷ Upon. *At*. See page 390.

and adventure,¹ a composition of glorious natures doth put life into business; and those that are of solid and sober natures, have more of the ballast than of the sail. In fame of learning, the flight will be slow without some feathers of ostentation: 'Qui de contemnenda gloria libros scribunt, nomen suum inscribunt.'² Socrates, Aristotle, Galen, were men full of ostentation: certainly vain glory helpeth to perpetuate a man's memory; and virtue was never so beholden³ to human nature, as⁴ it received its due at the second hand. Neither had the fame of Cicero, Seneca, Plinius Secundus, borne her age so well if it had not been joined with some vanity in themselves, like unto varnish, that makes ceilings not only shine, but last.

But all this while, when I speak of vain glory, I mean not of that property that Tacitus doth attribute to Mucianus, 'Omnium, quæ dixerat feceratque, arte quadam ostentator.'⁵ for that proceeds not of vanity, but of natural magnanimity and discretion; and in some persons it is not only comely, but gracious:⁶ for excusations,⁷ cessions,⁸ modesty itself, well governed, are but arts of ostentation; and amongst those arts there is none better than that which Plinius Secundus speaketh of, which is, to be liberal of praise and commendation to others, in that wherein a man's self hath any perfection; for, saith Pliny, very wittingly, 'In commending another, you do yourself right';⁹ for he that you commend is either superior to you in that¹⁰ you commend, or inferior; if he be inferior, if he be to be commended, you much more; if he be superior, if he be not to be commended, you much less.

¹ Charge and adventure. *Cost and risk*. 'That I may make the gospel of Christ without charge.'—1 Cor. ix. 18. 'One castle yielded; but two stood on their adventure.'—Hayward.

² 'Those who write books on despising glory inscribe their names therein.'—Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* i. 15.

³ Beholden. *Indebted*.

'We are not much beholden to your love.'—Shakespeare.

⁴ As. *That*. See page 26.

⁵ 'By a certain art he made a display of all he had said or done.'—Hist. xi. 80.

⁶ Gracious. *Graceful*. See page 456.

⁷ Excusation. *Excuse; apology*.

'He made his excusation,

And feigneth cause of pure drede.'—Shakespeare. (Gower.)

⁸ Cessions. *Concessions*.

⁹ Plin. *Epist.* vi. 17.

¹⁰ That. *What*. See page 82.

Vain glorious men are the scorn of wise men, the admiration of fools, the idols of parasites, and the slaves of their own vaunts.

ANTITHETA ON VAIN GLORY.

PRO.

‘Qui suas laudes appetit, aliorum simul appetit utilitates.

‘He who earnestly seeks glory for himself, is seeking, at the same time, the welfare of others.’

CONTRA.

* * * * *

‘Turpe est proco sollicitare ancillam est autem virtutis ancilla laus.

‘It is disgraceful for a wooer to pay court to the handmaid; now glory is the handmaid of virtue.’

ANNOTATION.

The following passage from the *Lessons on Morals* is somewhat to the purpose of this Essay:—

‘It is a mistake to think that any one who does happen to be superior to the generality, intellectually or morally, is bound, as a point of modesty, to be ignorant of this, or to pretend to be so, and to think, or profess to think, himself inferior to what he really is. For, on the one hand, it cannot be a part of Duty to be under any kind of *mistake*; and, on the other hand, there cannot be any virtue in feigning or affectation of any kind.

‘Properly speaking, self-conceit and modesty have reference to a man’s estimate of himself as *compared with the reality*. A conceited man *over-rates* himself; and a modest man does not. But many people do not at all take this into account. They are apt to reckon a man conceited who has a *high* opinion (whether rightly or wrongly) of his own powers; and him modest who forms a *low* one. And yet it may so happen that this latter may be in reality over-rating himself in thinking himself not below the average, or only a little below: and the other may possibly be even under-rating himself in thinking himself only a little above it.

‘If you could imagine a mouse imagining itself just equal to such a *small* animal as a rabbit, and an elephant believing itself only equal to such a *large* animal as an ox, they would be making opposite mistakes.

‘But if your belief is, that you do possess some superior endowments as to any point, take care—as far as regards yourself—to be thankful to the Giver of all such advantages, and to remember that for every Talent entrusted to you, you are accountable to Him. And, as far as regards others, take care to avoid *ostentation*, and disdainful assumption of superiority. For, this is offensive, even in such matters of fact as admit of no possible mistake or doubt. A person, for instance, who should have gained some great prize in a competition, or discovered a new Planet, or invented a new Telegraph, or performed some other notable exploit, must not boast, nor be always reminding people of what he has done.

‘And, on the other hand, even if he should be mistaken in his opinion of his own abilities, and think them greater than they are, a mere error of judgment will not be imputed to him as a sin, provided he keep clear of pride; nor will he be offensive to others, if he is but free from disdainful arrogance, and from ostentation.

‘Again, there is no humility in a mere *general* confession that you are a ‘miserable sinner,’ if in each particular case you always stoutly justify yourself, and can never be brought to own a fault.

‘Lastly, there is no humility in confessing any faults which you do not strive to *correct*. It would indeed be a shocking presumption to think that you need not aim at improvement, but are quite good enough, being *without* faults; but it is still greater presumption to think that you are good enough *with* all your faults. ‘If we say that we *have no* sin, we deceive ourselves;’ but if we say that we *have* sins, and yet do not earnestly seek God’s promised help ‘to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,’ this would be even a more fatal self-deception.

‘Remember then that the virtue of christian Humility is not to be considered as some bitter potion which you can swallow in a large dose, once for all, and so have done with it; but rather as a kind of *alterative* medicine, to be taken daily, and drop by drop.

‘You must study, daily, to be open to conviction—patient of opposition—ready to listen to reproof, even when you are not convinced that it is deserved—ready, when you *are* convinced, to confess an error—and glad to receive hints, and suggestions,

and corrections, even from your inferiors in ability—and never overbearing or uncharitable towards those who differ from you, or ostentatious of superiority.

‘All this will be a more laborious and difficult task than to make fine speeches about your ignorance, and weakness, and sinfulness; but it is thus that true Humility is shown, and is exercised, and cultivated.’

ESSAY LV. OF HONOUR AND REPUTATION.

THE winning of honour is but the revealing of a man's virtue and worth without disadvantage; for some in their actions do woo and affect¹ honour and reputation—which sort of men are commonly much talked of, but inwardly little admired—and some contrariwise,² darken their virtue in the show of it, so as they be undervalued in opinion. If a man perform that which hath not been attempted before, or attempted and given over, or hath been achieved, but not with so good circumstance,³ he shall purchase more honour than by effecting a matter of greater difficulty, or virtue, wherein he is but a follower. If a man so temper his actions, as⁴ in some one of them he doth content every faction or combination of people, the music will be the fuller. A man is an ill husband⁵ of his honour that entereth into any action, the failing wherein may disgrace him more than the carrying of it through can honour him. Honour that is gained and broken upon another⁶ hath the quickest reflection, like diamonds cut with fascets; and, therefore, let a man contend to excel any competitors of his honour, in outshooting them if he can, in their own bow. Discreet followers and servants help much to reputation: 'Omnis fama a domesticis emanat.'⁷ Envy, which is the canker of honour, is best extinguished⁸ by declaring a man's self, in his ends rather to

¹ Affect. *To desire earnestly; to aim at.* See page I.

² Contrariwise. *On the contrary.* See page 102.

³ Circumstances. *Adjuncts.*

'The pomp and circumstance of glorious war.'—*Shakespere.*

⁴ As. *That.* See page 26.

⁵ Husband. *An economist.*

'You have scarce time
To steal from spiritual leisure a brief span,
To keep your earthly audit: sure, in that
I deem you an ill husband.'—*Shakespere.*

⁶ Gained and broken upon another. (The Latin essay has, 'Honor qui comparativus est, et alium prægravat.') *Weighs down or depresses others.*

⁷ 'All fame emanates from domestics.'—Q. Cic. *de Petit. Consul.* v. 17.

⁸ Most editions have '*distinguished*' instead of '*extinguished*.' But the Latin essay has '*extinguitur*.'

seek merit than fame: and by attributing a man's successes rather to divine Providence and felicity, than to his own virtue or policy.

The true marshalling of the degrees of sovereign honour are these: in the first place are 'conditores imperiorum,' founders of States and commonwealths; such as were Romulus, Cyrus, Cæsar, Ottoman, Ismael: in the second place are 'legislatores,' lawgivers; which are also called second founders, or 'perpetui principes,'¹ because they govern by their ordinances after they are gone: such were Lycurgus, Solon, Justinian, Edgar, Alphonsus of Castile, the wise, that made the 'Siete partidas':² in third place are 'liberatores,' or 'salvatores';³ such as compound⁴ the long miseries of civil wars, or deliver their countries from servitude of strangers or tyrants; as Augustus Cæsar, Vespasianus, Aurelianus, Theodoricus, King Henry the Seventh of England, King Henry the Fourth of France: in the fourth place are 'propagatores,' or 'propugnatores imperii,'⁵ such as in honourable wars enlarge their territories, or make noble defence against invaders: and in the last place, are 'patres patriæ,'⁶ which reign justly, and make the times good wherein they live; both which last kinds need no examples, they are in such number. Degrees of honour in subjects, are, first, 'participes curarum,'⁷ those upon whom princes do discharge the greatest weight of their affairs; their right hands, as we may call them: the next are 'duces belli,'⁸ great leaders; such as are princes' lieutenants, and do them notable⁹ services in the wars: the third are 'gratosi,' favourites; such as exceed not this scantling,¹⁰ to be solace to the sovereign, and harmless to the people: and the fourth, 'negotiis pares';¹¹

¹ 'Perpetual rulers.'

² The 'Siete Partidas.' *An ancient Spanish code of laws, divided into seven parts; hence its name.*

³ 'Liberators' or 'preservers.'

⁴ Compound. *To put an end to by adjustment of differences.*

'I would to God all strifes were well compounded.'—*Shakespere.*

'Who should compound the controversies?'—*Whitgift.*

⁵ 'Extenders' or 'defenders of the empire.'

⁶ 'Fathers of their country.'

⁷ 'Participators in cares.'

⁸ 'Leaders in wars.'

⁹ Notable. *Remarkable.* See page 553.

¹⁰ Scantling. *A small proportion.* 'In this narrow scantling of capacity we enjoy but one pleasure at once.'—*Locke.* 'A scantling of wit lay gasping for life and groaning beneath a heap of rubbish.'—*Dryden.*

¹¹ 'Equal to the management of affairs.'

such as have great places under princes, and execute their places with sufficiency.¹ There is an honour, likewise, which may be ranked amongst the greatest, which happeneth rarely; that is, of such as sacrifice themselves² to death or danger for the good of their country; as was M. Regulus, and the two Decii.

ANNOTATIONS.

Bacon does not advert to the circumstance, that one man often gets the credit which is due to another; one being the ostensible, and another principally the real author of something remarkable; according to the proverb, that ‘little dogs find the hare, but the big ones catch it.’ And sometimes, again, the thing itself that is the most difficult and the most important will be overlooked, while much admiration is bestowed on something else which was an easy, natural, and almost inevitable result of it.

There cannot be a more striking example of this than the vast importance attached to the invention of *printing*, and the controversies as to who was the inventor; when, in fact, it was the invention of a cheap *paper* that was the really important step, and which could not but be speedily followed by the use of printing. I say the *use*, because, when introduced, it could hardly be called a new *invention*. The loaves of bread found at Pompeii and Herculaneum were stamped with the baker’s name. And, in fact, the seals used by the ancients were a stamp of the name, which was wetted with ink, and impressed on the parchment; so that *signing* and sealing were one and the same. Now all this is, substantially, of the character of printing. Whether we use fixed types, like the Chinese, or moveable, is a mere matter of detail.

But the only cause why this was not applied by the ancients to books, handbills, &c., was the costliness of papyrus and

¹ Sufficiency. *Ability*. See page 291.

² Sacrifice themselves. *Devote themselves*.

parchment. This limited the sale to so small a number of copies, that printing would have cost more than transcribing. As soon as a cheap *material* for books was invented, it was likely to occur, and probably did occur, to many, that a lower price, and a wider sale, would be secured by some kind of stamp.

Then, as to the real performers of some great feat, or originators of some measure or institution, History would furnish many instances of mistakes that have prevailed. A poem has come down to us celebrating Harmodius and Aristogeiton as having slain the tyrant of Athens, and restored liberty to their country. And Thucydides, who lived among the grandchildren of those who remembered the transaction, complains that such was the prevalent belief in his own day; though Hipparchus, whom those men assassinated, was not the tyrant, but was brother of Hippias, the actual sovereign, and who continued to reign some years longer.

In our own day, three of the most important measures were brought about, ostensibly, by ministers who, so far from being the real authors of them, were, in their own judgment and inclination, decidedly opposed to them—the repeal of the Roman-catholic disabilities, the abolition of slavery, and the introduction of free trade in corn. The ministries of the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel are well known to have been hostile to what was called Roman-catholic emancipation, and advocates of the corn laws, and to have been driven by necessity to take the steps they did. Yet it is possible that they may go down to posterity as the authors of those two great changes. It is not so generally known that Lord Melbourne, then one of the ministers, on going out of the House of Lords on the night that the bill passed for abolishing slavery, remarked to an acquaintance that if he could have had his own way in that matter, he would have left it quite alone.

It is remarkable that Bacon has said nothing about men's solicitude concerning *posthumous* reputation,—that delusion of the imagination (for it surely is such) of which there is perhaps no one quite destitute,—and which is often found peculiarly strong in those who disbelieve a Future State, and deride the believers. Yet granting that these latter are mistaken, and are

only grasping at a shadow, still they are hoping for what *they* at least believe to be real. They expect—whether erroneously or not—to have an actual consciousness of the enjoyment they look forward to. The others are *aware* that, when they shall have attained the prize of posthumous glory, they shall have no perception of it. They *know* that it is a shade they are grasping at. Yet Hume had this solicitude about his posthumous fame. ‘Knowing,’ says the *Edinburgh Review*,¹ ‘from Pope what is meant by a ruling passion, it is a poor thing to set it on the die of literary fame. In one way, he made the most of it; for his prescience of his growing reputation certainly soothed him in his last illness.’² This was something; but it is surely singular. Delusion for delusion, the *manes fabulaque* of another world are at least an improvement on the after-life of posthumous renown. Immortality on earth fades away before the light of immortality in a future state. On the other hand, what is to be said but ‘vanity of vanities!’ when a philosopher who has no expectation of a future state, and who is contemplating annihilation with complacency, is found, notwithstanding this, busied on his death-bed about his posthumous fame?—careful what men may be saying of his essays and his histories, after he himself is sleeping in the grave, where all things are forgotten!’

‘ . . . Which sort of men are commonly much talked of.’

‘A sort of man’ that is not only much talked of, but commonly admired, is a man who, along with a considerable degree of cleverness and plausible fluency, is what is called puzzle-headed:—destitute of sound, clear, cautious judgment. This puzzle-headedness conduces much to a very *sudden and rapid* rise to a (short-lived) celebrity.

Such was the description once given of an author, who was

¹ See an article on David Hume, *Edinburgh Review*, No. clxxi. January, 1847.

² There is a rumour afloat, which it is said has been traced up to the nurse who attended him in his last illness, that the cheerful calmness with which he is recorded to have awaited death, was only assumed in the presence of his old associates, to keep up his credit with them to the last, and that inwardly he was a prey to the most gloomy feelings, which were manifested when those friends were absent.

The truth or falsity of this account can never be fully ascertained in this world. It certainly is not at all intrinsically improbable.

at that time more talked about than almost any individual in the empire, and whom many admired as a surpassing genius, who had fully confuted the doctrines of Malthus, and made prodigious discoveries in political science. One of the company took up the speaker very sharply; observing that it was strange to speak disparagingly of a man who, without wealth, birth, or high connexions, had so *very rapidly* acquired great celebrity. The other replied by making the observation just above given. For, men do not, said he, give up their prejudices, and adopt new views, very readily; and consequently, one who refutes prevailing errors, and brings to light new or forgotten truths, will at first, and for a good while, find favour with but few. He will therefore have to wait (as was the case with Malthus) many years, and perhaps to his life's end, before he is appreciated. His credit will be lasting, but slow of growth. But the way to rise to *sudden* popularity, is to be a plausible advocate of *prevailing* doctrines, and to defend, with some appearance of originality, something which men *like* to believe, but have no good reason for believing.

Now this will never be done so well by the most skilful *dissembler*, as by one who is himself the sincere dupe of his own fallacies, and brings them forward accordingly with an air of simple earnestness. And this implies his being—with whatever ingenuity and eloquence—puzzle-headed.

There seemed to the company to be something in this; but they were as loth to admit it, as (according to the remark just above) men usually are in such a matter. 'What do you say,' they replied, 'to Mr. Pitt? He was an admired statesman at the age of twenty-three; and was he a puzzle-headed man?'

'Why, not *generally* such,' was the answer; 'but he *was* such in reference to the *particular point* which mainly *contributed to obtain him* that very early and speedy popularity. Look at the portraits of him at that time, and you will see a paper in his hand, or on his table, inscribed 'Sinking Fund.' It was his eloquent advocacy of that delusion (as all, now, admit it to have been) which brought him such sudden renown. And he could not have so ably recommended—nor indeed would he probably have adopted—that juggle of Dr. Price's, if he had not been himself the dupe of his fallacy; as Lord Grenville also was; who

afterwards published a pamphlet in which he frankly exposed the delusion.’

This could not be denied to be a confirmation of the paradox. And then another case,—the converse of the above—was adduced on the same side: a case in which the whole *British nation* were, in one particular, manifestly puzzle-headed, except *one* man: who was accordingly derided by all. In the dispute between Great Britain and her American colonies, though there were great differences of opinion—some being for, and others against taxing them; some for force, and some for conciliation—all agreed that the *loss* of them—the dismemberment of the Empire—would be a heavy calamity; and how to *keep them* was the problem to be solved. But Dean Tucker, standing quite alone, wrote a pamphlet to show that the separation would be no *loss* at all, and that we had best give them the independence they coveted, at once, and in a friendly way. Some thought he was writing in jest: the rest despised him as too absurd to be worth answering. But now (and for above half a century) every one admits that he was quite right, and regrets that his view was not adopted. He might well have used the description of Thucydides applied to his own work; κτῆμά ἐς αἰὲ μᾶλλον, ἡ ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν, ξύκειται.¹

By the bye, it is remarkable that Professor Smyth, who gives him due praise for this view, remarks, at the same time, on his strange absurdity in saying, that it would be very *easy* (though not at all worth while) to subdue the American insurgents; and that a hastily raised, disorderly militia could have no chance against a well disciplined and well commanded regular army.

But from the documents brought forward in an admirable article in the *Edinburgh Review* (January, 1846), on European and American State-Confederacies, it appears that Dean Tucker was right there also—that the game was in our hands, and Washington reduced to the brink of despair, and that nothing would have saved his cause, but such a series of blundering follies on the part of the British commanders, as never occurred before or since, and such as no one would have calculated on.

Of all the clever men then that at that time existed, and many of whom spoke eloquently on each side, Tucker was the

¹ It is composed so as to be regarded as a possession for ever, rather than as a prize declamation, intended only for the present.

only one who was not puzzle-headed. And he obtained some small share of late credit, but present contempt.

A very clear-headed man will always have detected some popular fallacies, and perceived some truths generally overlooked; and, in short, will always be somewhat in advance of the common run of his contemporaries. And if he has the courage to speak out on these points, he must wait till the next generation for the chief part at least of his popularity. The fame of clever but puzzle-headed advocates of vulgar errors, will spring up like a mushroom in a night, which rots in a day. His will be a tree, 'seris factura nepotibus umbram.'¹

The author in question furnished a striking confirmation of the paradox. In two or three years he and his book were totally forgotten. He himself outlived, by a good many years, his own mushroom-celebrity. He went off, like a comet into its aphelion, and became invisible. It would be difficult to find a copy of his works, except at the trunk-maker's. And the prophecy concerning him, in the conversation above recorded, is probably forgotten also by those who took part in it. 'Ipsæ periere ruinæ.'²

The truth is, that what people in general most readily and most cordially approve, is the echo of their own sentiments; and whatever effect this may produce must be short-lived. We hear of volcanic islands thrown up in a few days to a formidable size, and, in a few weeks or months, sinking down again or washed away; while other islands, which are the summits of banks covered with weed and drift sand, continue slowly increasing year after year, century after century. The man that is in a hurry to see the full effect of his own tillage, should cultivate annuals, and not forest trees. The clear-headed lover of truth is content to wait for the result of his. If he is wrong in the doctrines he maintains, or the measures he proposes, at least it is not for the sake of immediate popularity. If he is right, it will be found out in time, though, perhaps, not in *his* time. The preparers of the *mummies* were (Herodotus says) driven out of the house by the family who had engaged their services, with execrations and stones; but their work remains sound after three thousand years.

¹ Destined to afford shade to one's grandchildren.

² The very ruins are lost.

ESSAY LVI. OF JUDICATURE.

JUDGES ought to remember that their office is *jus dicere*, and not 'jus dare'—to interpret law, and not to make law, or give law—else will it be like the authority claimed by the church of Rome, which, under pretext of exposition of Scripture, doth not stick¹ to add and alter, and to pronounce that which they do not find, and by show of antiquity to introduce novelty. Judges ought to be more learned than witty, more reverend than plausible, and more advised than confident. Above all things, integrity is their portion and proper virtue. 'Cursed (saith the law) is he that removeth the landmark.'² The mislayer of a mere stone is to blame; but it is the unjust judge that is the capital remover of landmarks, when he defineth amiss of land and property. One foul sentence doth more hurt than many foul examples; for these do but corrupt the stream, the other corrupteth the fountain—so saith Solomon, 'Fons turbatus, et vena corrupta est justus cadens in causa sua coram adversario.'³

The office of judges may have a reference unto the parties that sue, unto the advocates that plead, unto clerks and ministers of justice underneath them, and to the sovereign or State above them.

First, for the causes of parties that sue. There be (saith the Scripture) 'that turn judgment into wormwood;' and surely there be also that turn it into vinegar; for injustice maketh it bitter, and delays make it sour. The principal duty of a judge is to suppress force and fraud, whereof force is the more pernicious when it is open, and fraud when it is close and disguised. Add thereto contentious suits, which ought to be spewed⁵ out as the surfeit of courts. A judge ought to

¹ Stick. *To scruple; to hesitate.* 'Rather than impute our miscarriages to our own corruptions, we do not stick to arraign Providence itself.'—*L'Estrange*.

² *Deut. xxvii. 17.*

³ 'A righteous man falling in his cause before his adversary is as a troubled fountain and a corrupt spring.'—*Prov. xxv. 26.*

⁴ *Amos v. 7.*

⁵ Spew. *To eject with loathing.* 'Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.'—*Revel. iii. 16.*

prepare his way to a just sentence, as God useth to prepare his way by raising valleys and taking down hills : so when there appeareth on either side a high hand, violent persecution, cunning advantages taken, combination, power, great counsel, then is the virtue of a judge seen to make inequality equal ; that he may plant his judgment as upon even ground. ‘ Qui fortiter emungit, elicit sanguinem ;’¹ and where the wine-press is hard wrought,² it yields a harsh wine, that tastes of the grape-stone. Judges must beware of hard constructions and strained inferences ; for there is no worse torture than the torture of laws ; especially in case of laws penal, they ought to have care, that that which was meant for terror,³ be not turned into rigour : and that they bring not upon people that shower whereof the Scripture speaketh, ‘ Pluet super eos laqueos ;’⁴ for penal laws pressed, are a shower of snares upon the people : therefore let penal laws, if they have been sleepers of long,⁵ or if they be grown unfit for the present time, be by wise judges confined in the execution : ‘ Judicis officium est, ut res, ita tempora rerum,’ &c.⁶ In causes of life and death, judges ought (as far as the law permitteth) in justice to remember mercy, and to cast a severe eye upon the example, but a merciful eye upon the person.

Secondly, for the advocates and counsel that plead. Patience and gravity of hearing is an essential part of justice, and an over-speaking judge is no well-tuned cymbal.⁷ It is no grace to a judge first to find that which he might have heard in due time from the bar, or to show quickness of conceit⁸ in cutting off evidence or counsel too short, or to prevent⁹ information by questions, though pertinent. The parts of a judge in hearing are four :—to direct the evidence ; to moderate length,

¹ ‘ Who wrings hard draws forth blood.’ Cf. *Prov.* xxx. 33.

² Wrought. *Worked*. ‘ It had been a breach of peace to have wrought any mine of his.’—*Raleigh*.

³ Terror. *What may excite dread*. ‘ Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil.’—*Romans* xiii. 3.

⁴ ‘ He shall rain snares upon them.’—*Psalms* xi. 6.

⁵ Of. *For ; during*. ‘ He was desirous to see him of a long season.’—*Luke* xxiii. 8.

⁶ ‘ It is the duty of a judge to take into consideration the times, as well as the circumstances, of facts.’—*Ovid, Trist.* l. i. 37.

⁷ *Psalms* cl. 5.

⁸ Conceit. *Conception ; apprehension*. ‘ I shall be found of a quick conceit in judgment, and I shall be admired.’—*Wisdom* viii. 11.

⁹ Prevent. *Forestall*. See *Matt.* xvii. 25.

repetition, or impertinency¹ of speech; to recapitulate, select, and collate the material points of that which hath been said; and to give the rule or sentence. Whatsoever is above these is too much, and proceedeth either of² glory³ and willingness to speak, or of impatience to hear, or of shortness of memory, or of want of a stayed and equal attention. It is a strange thing to see that the boldness of advocates should prevail with judges; whereas they should imitate God, in whose seat they sit, who represseth the presumptuous, and giveth grace to the modest; but it is more strange that judges should have noted favourites, which cannot but cause multiplication of fees and suspicion of by-ways. There is due from the judge to the advocate some commendation and gracing,⁴ where causes are well handled and fair⁵ pleaded, especially towards the side which obtaineth⁶ not; for that upholds in the client the reputation of his counsel, and beats down in him the conceit⁷ of his cause. There is likewise due to the Public a civil reprehension of advocates, where there appeareth cunning counsel, gross neglect, slight information, indiscreet pressing, or an over-bold defence. And let not the counsel at the bar chop⁸ with the judge, nor wind himself into the handling of the cause anew, after the judge hath declared his sentence; but, on the other side, let not the judge meet the cause half-way, nor give occasion to the party to say his counsel or proofs were not heard.

Thirdly, for that that concerns clerks and ministers. The place of justice is a hallowed place; and therefore not only the

¹ Impertinency. *Irrelevancy*. See page 95.

² Of. *From*. See page 286.

³ Glory. *Display; vaunting*. See page 565.

⁴ Grace. *To favour*.

‘Regardless pass’d her o’er, nor *grac’d* with kind adieu.’—*Dryden*.

⁵ Fair. *Fairly*.

‘Entreat her *fair*.’—*Shakespeare*.

⁶ Obtain. *To prevail; succeed*. ‘Thou shalt not *obtain* nor escape by fleeing.’—*Ecclesiasticus* xi. 10.

⁷ Conceit. *Opinion*. ‘Seest thou a man wise in his own *conceit*? There is more hope of a fool than of him.’—*Prov.* xxvi. 12.

‘I shall not fail to approve the fair *conceit*
The king hath of you.’—*Shakespeare*.

⁸ Chop. *To bandy words*.

‘The *chopping* French we do not understand.’—*Shakespeare*.

bench, but the footpace¹ and precincts, and purprise² thereof, ought to be preserved without scandal and corruption; for, certainly, grapes (as the Scripture saith) 'will not be gathered of thorns or thistles';³ neither can justice yield her fruit with sweetness amongst the briars and brambles of catching and polling⁴ clerks and ministers. The attendance of courts is subject to four bad instruments: first, certain persons that are sowers of suits, which make the court swell, and the country pine: the second sort is of those that engage courts in quarrels of jurisdiction, and are not truly 'amici curiæ,' but 'parasiti curiæ,'⁵ in puffing a court up beyond her bounds for their own scraps and advantages: the third sort is of those that may be accounted the left hands of courts: persons that are full of nimble and sinister tricks and shifts, whereby they pervert the plain and direct courses of courts, and bring justice into oblique lines and labyrinths: and the fourth is the poller⁶ and exacter of fees, which justifies the common resemblance of the courts of justice to the bush, whereunto while the sheep flies for defence in weather, he is sure to lose part of the fleece. On the other side, an ancient⁷ clerk, skilful in precedents, wary in proceedings, and understanding in the business of the court, is an excellent figure of a court, and doth many times point the way to the judge himself.

Fourthly, for that which may concern the sovereign and estate. Judges ought, above all, to remember the conclusion of the Roman twelve tables, 'Salus populi suprema lex';⁸ and to know that laws, except they be in order to that end, are but things captious, and oracles not well inspired: therefore it is a happy thing in a State, when kings and states do often consult

¹ Footpace. *A lobby.*

² Purprise. *Enclosure.* 'But their wives and children were to assemble together in a certain place in Phocis, and they filled the *purprises* and precincts thereof with a huge quantity of food.'—*Holland.*

³ *Matt.* vii. 16.

⁴ Polling. *Plundering.* 'Peeling and *polling* were voyded, and in place thereof succeeded liberality.'—*Erasmus.*

⁵ 'Friends of the court,' but 'parasites of the court.'

⁶ Poller. *Plunderer.* 'With Sallust, he may rail downright at a spoiler of countries, and yet in office to be a most grievous *poller* himself.'—*Burton.*

⁷ Ancient. *Senior.* 'Junius and Andronicus were in Christianity his *ancients.*'—*Hooker.*

⁸ 'The safety of the people is the supreme law.'

with judges : and again, when judges do often consult with the king and State : the one, where there is matter of law intervenient¹ in business of state ; the other when there is some consideration of State intervenient in matter of law ; for many times the things deduced to judgment may be ‘ meum’ and ‘ tuum,’² when the reason and consequence thereof may trench to point of estate : I call matter of estate, not only the parts of sovereignty, but whatsoever introduceth any great alteration or dangerous precedent : or concerneth manifestly any great portion of people ; and let no man weakly conceive that just laws, and true policy, have any antipathy ; for they are like the spirits and sinews, that one moves with the other. Let judges also remember, that Solomon’s throne was supported by lions on both sides :³ let them be lions, but yet lions under the throne ; being circumspect, that they do not check or oppose any points of sovereignty. Let not judges also be so ignorant of their own right as to think there is not left them, as a principal part of their office, a wise use and application of laws ; for they may remember what the Apostle saith of a greater law than theirs, ‘ Nos scimus quia lex bona est, modo quis ea utatur legitime.’⁴

ANTITHETA.

PRO.

‘ Non est interpretatio, sed divinatio, quæ recedit a litera.

‘ *If we depart from the letter, we are not interpreting the law, but guessing at the law.*’

‘ Cum receditur a litera, judex transit in legislatorem.

‘ *When we depart from the letter, the judge is changed into a legislator.*’

CONTRA.

‘ Ex omnibus verbis eliciendus est sensus, qui interpretur singula.

‘ *The sense of the whole should be taken as the interpreter of each single word.*’

‘ Pessima tyrannis lex in equuleo.

‘ *Law put to the rack is the worst of tyrannies.*’

¹ Intervenient. *Intervening*. ‘ I omit things *intervenient*.’—*Wotton*.

² ‘ Mine’ and ‘ thine.’

³ 1 *Kings* x. 20.

⁴ ‘ We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully.’—1 *Tim.* i. 8.

ANNOTATION.

‘There is due to the public a civil reprehension of advocates, where there appeareth cunning counsel, indiscreet pressing, or an over-bold defence.’

The temptation to an ‘over-bold defence’—to a wilful misleading of a judge or jury by specious sophistry, or seeking to embarrass an honest witness, and bring his testimony into discredit—is one to which the advocate is, undeniably, greatly exposed. Nay, it has even been maintained by no mean authority,¹ ‘that it is part of a pleader’s duty to have no scruples about any act whatever that may benefit his client.’ ‘There are many whom it may be needful to remind,’ says an eminent lawyer, ‘that an advocate, by the sacred duty of his connexion with his client, knows, in the discharge of that office, but one person in the world—that client, and none other. To serve that client, by all expedient means, to protect that client at all hazards and costs to all others (even the party already injured) and amongst others, to himself, is the highest and most unquestioned of his duties. And he must not regard the alarm, the suffering, the torment, the destruction, which it may bring upon any others. Nay, separating even the duties of a patriot from those of an advocate, he must go on, reckless of the consequences, if his fate should unhappily be to involve his country in confusion, for his client.’—[*Licence of Counsel*, p. 3.]

On the other hand, it is recorded that ‘Sir Matthew Hale, whenever he was convinced of the injustice of any cause, would engage no more in it than to explain to his client the grounds of that conviction; he abhorred the practice of misreciting evidence, quoting precedents in books falsely or unfairly, so as to deceive ignorant juries or inattentive judges; and he adhered to the same scrupulous sincerity in his pleadings which he observed in the other transactions of life. It was as great a dishonour as a man was capable of, that for a little money he was hired to say otherwise than he thought.’—[*Licence of Counsel*, p. 4.]

¹ ‘Lecture on the Intellectual and Moral Influences of the Professions,’ reprinted in the *Elements of Rhetoric*.

‘The advocate,’ says another eminent legal writer, ‘observing in an honest witness a deponent whose testimony promises to be adverse, assumes terrific tones and deportment, and pretending to find dishonesty on the part of the witness, strives to give his testimony the appearance of it. I say a *bond fide* witness; for in the case of a witness who, by an adverse interrogator, is really looked upon as dishonest, this is not the proper course, nor is it taken with him. For bringing to light the falsehood of a witness really believed to be mendacious, the more suitable, or rather the only suitable course is to forbear to express the impression he has inspired. Supposing his tale clear of suspicion, the witness runs on his course with fluency till he is entangled in some irretrievable contradiction, at variance with other parts of his own story, or with facts notorious in themselves, or established by proofs from other sources.’ —[*Licence of Counsel*, p. 5.]

‘We happen to be aware, from the practice of persons of the highest experience in the examinations of witnesses, that this description is almost without exception correct, and that, as a general rule, it is only the honest and timid witness who is confounded by imperious deportment. The practice gives pre-eminence to the unscrupulous witness who can withstand such assaults. Roger North, in his life of Sir Dudley North, relates that the law of Turkey, like our absurd law of evidence in some cases, required the testimony of two witnesses in proof of each fact; and that a practice had in consequence arisen, and had obtained the sanction of general opinion, of using a false witness in proof of those facts which admitted of only one witness. Sir Dudley North, while in Turkey, had numerous disputes which it became necessary to settle by litigation,—‘and,’ says his biographer, ‘our merchant found by experience, that in a direct fact a false witness was a surer card than a true one; for if the judge has a mind to baffle a testimony, an honest, harmless witness, that doth not know his play, cannot so well stand his many captious questions, as a false witness, used to the trade, will do; for he hath been exercised, and is prepared for such handling, and can clear himself, when the other will be confounded: therefore circumstances may be such as to make the false one more eligible.’

According to one, then, of the writers I have cited, an

advocate is justified, and is fulfilling a duty, not only in protesting with solemnity his own full conviction of the justice of his client's cause, though he may feel no such conviction,—not only in feigning various emotions (like an actor; except that the actor's credit consists in its being *known* that he is only feigning), such as pity, indignation, moral approbation, or disgust, or contempt, when he neither feels anything of the kind, nor believes the case to be one that justly calls for such feelings; but he is also occasionally to entrap or mislead, to revile, insult, and calumniate persons whom he may in his heart believe to be respectable persons and honest witnesses. Another on the contrary observes: 'We might ask our learned friend and fellow-Christian, as well as the learned and noble editor of Paley's *Natural Theology*, and his other fellow-professors of the religion which says 'that lying lips are an abomination to the Lord,' to explain to us how they reconcile the practice under their rule, with the christian precepts, or avoid the solemn scriptural denunciation—'Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter; . . which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him.'—[*Licence of Counsel*, p. 10.].

Of the necessity and allowableness of the practices upon which these opposite legal opinions have been given, I leave every one to judge for himself. For my own part, I think that the kind of skill by which a cross-examiner succeeds in alarming, misleading, or bewildering an honest witness, may be characterized as the most, or one of the most, base and depraved of all possible employments of intellectual power. Nor is it by any means the most effectual way of eliciting *truth*. The mode best adapted for attaining this object is, I am convinced, quite different from that by which an honest, simple-minded witness is most easily baffled and confused. I have seen the experiment tried, of subjecting a witness to such a kind of cross-examination by a practical lawyer as would have been, I am convinced, the most likely to alarm and perplex many an honest witness; and all, without any effect in shaking the testimony; and afterwards by a totally opposite mode of examination, such as would not have at all perplexed one who was honestly telling the truth, that same witness was drawn on, step by step, to acknow-

ledge the utter falsity of the whole. Generally speaking, a quiet, gentle, and straightforward, though full and careful, examination, will be the most adapted to elicit truth; and the manœuvres, and the browbeating, which are the most adapted to confuse an honest, simple-minded witness, are just what the dishonest one is the best prepared for. The more the storm blusters, the more carefully he wraps round him the cloak, which a warm sunshine will often induce him to throw off.

I will add one remark upon the danger incurred by the advocate—even if he be one who would scruple either wilfully to use sophistry to mislead a judge, or to perplex and browbeat an honest witness—of having his mind alienated from the investigation of truth. Bishop Butler observes, and laments, that it is very common for men to have ‘a curiosity to know what is *said*, but no curiosity to know what is *true*.’ Now, none can be (other points being equal) more in need of being put on his guard against this fault than he who is professionally occupied with a multitude of cases, in each of which he is to consider what may be *plausibly urged* on both sides; while the question *what ought* to be the decision is out of his province as a pleader. I am supposing him not to be seeking to mislead by urging *fallacious* arguments; but there will often be sound and valid arguments—real probabilities—on opposite sides. A Judge, or any one whose business it is to ascertain truth, is to decide according to the *preponderance* of the reasons; but the pleader’s business is merely to set forth as forcibly as possible those on his own side. And if he thinks that the habitual practice of this has no tendency to generate in him, morally, any indifference, or, intellectually, any incompetency, in respect of the ascertainment of truth,—if he consider himself quite safe from any such danger,—I should then say that he is in very great danger.

ESSAY LVII. OF ANGER.

TO seek to extinguish anger utterly is but a bravery¹ of the Stoics. We have better oracles: 'Be angry, but sin not; let not the sun go down upon your anger.'² Anger must be limited and confined, both in place and in time. We will first speak how the natural inclination and habit 'to be angry,' may be attempered³ and calmed; secondly, how the particular motions of anger may be repressed, or, at least, refrained⁴ from doing mischief; thirdly, how to raise anger, or appease anger in another.

For the first there is no other way but to meditate and ruminate well upon the effects of anger, how it troubles Man's life; and the best time to do this, is to look back upon anger when the fit is thoroughly over. Seneca saith well, 'that anger is like rain, which breaks itself upon that it falls.'⁵ The Scripture exhorteth us 'to possess our souls in patience:'⁶ whosoever is out of patience, is out of possession of his soul. Men must not turn bees:

'Animasque in vulnere ponunt.'⁷

Anger is certainly a kind of baseness, as it appears well in the weakness of those subjects in whom it reigns, children, women, old folks, sick folks. Only men must beware that they carry their anger rather with scorn than with fear, so that they may seem rather to be above the injury than below it; which is a thing easily done, if a man will give law to himself in it.

¹ Bravery. *Bravado*. 'One Tait, who was then of the Lord's party, came forth in a *bravery*, asking if any had courage to break a lance for his mistress.'—*Spottiswode*.

² *Ephes. iv. 26*.

³ Attemper. *To temper; soften*.

'Those smiling eyes, *attempring* every ray.'—*Pope*.

⁴ Refrain. *To restrain*.

'I *refrain* my lips.

I *refrain* my soul and keep it low.'

⁵ Sen. *De Irâ, i. 1*.

⁶ *Luke xxi. 19*.

⁷ 'And leave their lives in the wound.'—*Virg. Georg. iv. 238*.

For the second point, the causes and motives of anger are chiefly three: first, to be too sensible of hurt; for no man is angry that feels not himself hurt; and, therefore, tender and delicate persons must needs be oft¹ angry, they have so many things to trouble them which more robust natures have little sense of; the next is, the apprehension and construction of the injury offered, to be, in the circumstances thereof, full of contempt—for contempt is that which putteth an edge upon anger, as much, or more, than the hurt itself; and, therefore, when men are ingenious in picking out circumstances of contempt, they do kindle their anger much; lastly, opinion of the touch² of a man's reputation doth multiply and sharpen anger, wherein the remedy is, that a man should have, as Gonsalvo was wont to say, 'telam honoris crassiore.'³ But in all refrainings of anger, it is the best remedy to win time and to make a man's self believe that the opportunity of his revenge is not yet come; but that he foresees a time for it, and so to still himself in the mean time, and reserve it.

To contain⁴ anger from mischief, though it take hold of a man, there be two things whereof you must have special caution: the one of extreme bitterness of words, especially if they be aculeate⁵ and proper;⁶ for 'communia maledicta'⁷ are nothing so much; and again, that in anger a man reveal no secrets; for that makes him not fit for society: the other, that you do not peremptorily break off in any business in a fit of anger: but howsoever⁸ you show bitterness, do not act anything that is not revocable.

For raising and appeasing anger in another, it is done chiefly

¹ Oft. Often. See page 377.

² Touch. Censure. 'I never bare any touch of conscience with greater regret.'
—King Charles.

³ 'A thicker web of honour.'—A. L. II. xx. 12.

⁴ Contain. To restrain.

'Fear not, my lord, we can contain ourselves.'—Shakespeare.

⁵ Aculeate. Pointed; sharp; stinging.

⁶ Proper. Appropriate.

'In Athens all was pleasure, mirth, and play,

All proper to the Spring and sprightly May.'—Dryden.

⁷ General reproaches.

⁸ Howsoever. However. 'Berosus, who, after Moses, was one of the most ancient, howsoever he has since been corrupted, doth in the substance of all agree.'
—Raleigh.

by chusing of times when men are frowardest and worst disposed to incense them ; again, by gathering (as was touched before) all that you can find out to aggravate the contempt ; and the two remedies are by the contraries : the former to take good times, when first to relate to a man an angry¹ business, for the first impression is much ; and the other is, to sever, as much as may be, the construction of the injury from the point of contempt ; imputing it to misunderstanding, fear, passion, or what you will.

ANNOTATION.

Aristotle, in his *Rhetoric* (book ii. chap. 2)—a work with which Bacon seems to have been little, if at all, acquainted—defines anger to be ‘a desire, accompanied by mental uneasiness, of avenging oneself, or, as it were, inflicting punishment for something that appears an unbecoming slight, in things which concern either one’s self, or some of one’s friends.’ And he hence infers that, if this be anger, it must be invariably felt towards some *individual*, not against a *class* or description of persons. And he afterwards grounds upon this definition a distinction between *anger* and *hatred* ; between which, he says, there are several points of comparison. Anger arises out of something having a personal reference to ourselves ; whereas hatred is independent of such considerations, since it is borne towards a person, merely on account of the believing him to be of a certain description or character. In the next place, anger is accompanied by pain ; hatred is not so. Again, anger would be satisfied to inflict some pain on its object, but hatred desires nothing short of deadly harm ; the angry man desires that the pain he inflicts should be *known* to come from *him* ; but hatred cares not for this. Again, the feeling of anger is softened by time, but hatred is incurable. Once more, the angry man might be induced to pity the object of his anger, if many misfortunes befel him ; but he who feels hatred cannot

¹ Angry. *Provoking anger.* •

‘That was to him an *angry* jape (trick).’—*Shakespeare.*

be thus moved to pity, for he desires the destruction of the object of his hatred.¹

Adam Smith, in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, seems to consider as the chief point of distinction (and this, too, is noticed by Aristotle also) between anger and hatred, the necessity to the gratification of the former that the object of it should not only be punished, but punished by means of the offended person, and on account of the particular injury inflicted. Anger requires 'that the offender should not only be made to grieve in his turn, but to grieve for that particular wrong which has been done by him. The natural gratification of this passion tends, of its own accord, to produce all the political ends of punishment; the correction of the criminal, and example to the Public.'²

It is to be observed, that in seeking to pacify one who is angry, opposite courses must be pursued with persons of two opposite dispositions.

One man is at once calmed by submission, and readily accepts an apology. Another is more and more irritated the more you acknowledge a fault, and is led, by the earnestness of your entreaty for pardon, to think himself more grievously wronged than he had at first supposed. The former has something of the character of the dog, which will never bite a man, or another dog, *who lies down*. And he will sometimes come to convince himself that he had no reason to be so angry, unless you deny that he had. The other can only be pacified by stoutly defending yourself, and maintaining that he was wrong to be displeased. These persons resemble respectively the thistle and the nettle; of which the one hurts most when pressed hard, and the other, when touched gently.

There is a kind of *false courage* noticed by Aristotle (*Ethics*, book iii.) produced by Anger [*θυμός*], which he calls the courage of brutes. Savages accordingly work themselves up into a rage by their *war-dance*, preparatory to going into battle; just as the lion was believed by the ancients to lash himself into fury with his tail. And one may find not a few, in civilized

¹ Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. Book II., chap. iv.

² Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Part II., chap. i. p. 113. Eleventh edition.

society, who are brave only under the excitement of anger. But it is *cool* courage that is the most to be relied on. The firmest men are almost always calm.

A man of violent and revengeful temper will sometimes exercise great self-control from motives of prudence, when he sees that he could not vent his resentment without danger or loss to himself. Such self-restraint as this does not at all tend to subdue or soften his fierce and malignant passions, and to make him a mild and placable character. It only keeps the fire smouldering within, instead of bursting out into a flame. He is not quelling the desire of revenge, but only repressing it till he shall have an opportunity of indulging it more safely and effectually. And, accordingly, he will have to exercise the same painful self-restraint again and again on every fresh occasion. But to exert an equal self-restraint, on a good principle, with a sincere and earnest desire to subdue revengeful feelings, and to form a mild, and generous, and forgiving temper,—this will produce quite a different result. A man who acts thus on a right motive, will find his task easier and easier on each occasion; because he will become less sensitive to provocations, and will have been forming a habit of not merely avoiding any outward expression of anger in words or acts, but also of indulging no resentful feelings within.

It is to be observed, that generous forgiveness of injuries is a point of christian duty respecting which some people fall into confusion of thought. They confound together personal *resentment*, and *disapprobation* of what is morally wrong. As was remarked above (Essay IV.), a man who has cheated you, or slandered, or otherwise wronged *you*, is neither *more* nor *less* a cheat or a slanderer, than if he had done the same to a stranger. And in that light he ought to be viewed. Such a person is one on whom you should not indeed wish to inflict any suffering beyond what may be necessary to reform him, and to deter other wrong-doers; and you should seek to benefit him in the highest degree by bringing him to a sense of his sin. But you ought not to chuse such a man as an associate, or to trust him, and in all respects treat him as if he had done nothing wrong. You should therefore take care, on the one hand, that the personal

injury you may have suffered does not lead you to think worse of a man than he deserves, or to treat him worse; and, on the other hand, you should not allow a false generosity to destroy in your mind the distinctions of right and wrong. Nor, again, should the desire of gaining credit for magnanimity, lead you to pretend to think favourably of wrong conduct, merely because it is you that have suffered from it. None but thoughtless or misjudging people will applaud you for this. The duty of christian forgiveness does not require you, nor are you allowed, to look on injustice, or any other fault, with indifference, as if it were nothing wrong at all, merely because it is you that have been wronged.

But even where we cannot but censure, in a moral point of view, the conduct of those who have injured us, we should remember that such treatment as may be very fitting for them to receive, may be very unfitting for us to give. To cherish, or to gratify, haughty resentment, is a departure from the pattern left us by Him who 'endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself,' and is not to be justified by any offence that can be committed against us. And it is this recollection of Him who, faultless Himself, deigned to leave us an example of meekness and long-suffering, that is the true principle and motive of christian forgiveness. We shall best fortify our patience under injuries, by remembering how much we ourselves have to be forgiven, and that it was 'while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' Let the Christian therefore accustom himself to say of any one who has greatly wronged him, '*that man owes me an hundred pence*;' ¹ while *I* hope to be pardoned a debt of 'ten thousand talents.'

An old Spanish writer says, 'To return evil for good is devilish; to return good for good is human; but to return good for evil is godlike.'

¹ *Matt.* xviii.

ESSAY LVIII. OF VICISSITUDES OF THINGS.

SOLOMON saith, 'There is no new thing upon the earth :'¹ so that as Plato had an imagination that all knowledge was but remembrance,² so Solomon giveth his sentence, 'That all novelty is but oblivion ;' whereby you may see, that the river of Lethe runneth as well above ground as below. There is an abstruse astrologer that saith, 'If it were not for two things that are constant (the one is, that the fixed stars ever stand at like distance one from another, and never come nearer together, nor go farther asunder ; the other, that the diurnal motion perpetually keepeth time), no individual would last one moment.' Certain it is that matter is in a perpetual flux,³ and never at a stay. The great winding-sheets that bury all things in oblivion are two, deluges and earthquakes. As for conflagrations and great droughts, they do not merely⁴ dispeople⁵ or destroy. Phaeton's car went but a day ; and the three years' drought, in the time of Elias,⁶ was but particular, and left people alive. As for the great burnings by lightnings, which are often in the West Indies,⁷ they are but narrow ; but in the other two destructions, by deluge and earthquake, it is farther to be noted, that the remnant of people which hap⁸ to be reserved, are commonly ignorant and mountainous people, that can give no account of the time past ; so that the oblivion is all one, as if none had been left. If you consider well of the people of the

¹ *Eccles. i. 9.*

² See *Advancement of Learning*. Dedication.

³ Flux. *Fluctuation*. 'Our language, like our bodies, is in a perpetual flux.'—*Felton*.

⁴ Merely. *Completely*. In the Latin it is *penitus*. See Essay xxix.

⁵ Dispeople. *Depopulate*.

'Kings, furious and severe,
Who claimed the skies, *dispeopled* air and floods,
The lonely lords of empty wilds and woods.'—*Pope*.

⁶ *1 Kings xvii.*

⁷ West Indies. 'In Bacon's time was meant by West Indies all the countries included under the name of the Spanish Main : that is, all the continental parts of America discovered by the Spaniards, or the countries which now form Venezuela, New Granada, Central America, Peru, &c.'—*Spiers*.

⁸ Hap. *Happen*. 'To brandish the tongue wantonly, to slash and smite with it any that *happeth* to come in our way, doth argue malice or madness.'—*Barrow*.

West Indies, it is very probable that they are a newer or a younger people than the people of the old world; and it is much more likely, that the destruction that hath heretofore been there, was not by earthquakes (as the Egyptian priest told Solon, concerning the island of Atlantis,¹ that it was swallowed by an earthquake), but rather, that it was desolated by a particular² deluge—for earthquakes are seldom in those parts: but, on the other side, they have such pouring rivers, as³ the rivers of Asia, and Africa, and Europe, are but brooks to them. Their Andes likewise, or mountains, are far higher than those with us; whereby it seems, that the remnants of generations of men were in such a particular deluge saved. As for the observation that Machiavel⁴ hath, that the jealousy of sects doth much extinguish the memory of things—traducing⁵ Gregory the Great, that he did what in him lay to extinguish all heathen antiquities—I do not find that those zeals⁶ do any great effects, nor last long; as it appeared in the succession of Sabinian, who did revive the former antiquities.

The vicissitudes, or mutations, in the superior globe, are no fit matter for this present argument.⁷ It may be, Plato's great year,⁸ if the world should last so long, would have some effect, not in renewing the state of like individuals (for that is the fume⁹ of those that conceive the celestial bodies have more accurate influences upon these things below, than indeed they have), but in gross.¹⁰ Comets, out of question, have likewise

¹ Vid. Plat. *Tim.* iii. 24, seq.

² Particular. *Partial; not general.*

³ As. *That.* See page 26.

⁴ Mach. *Disc. Sop.* liv. ii. 5.

⁵ Traduce. *To condemn; to censure, whether justly or unjustly.* (Now, to calumniate, to slander.)

⁶ Zeals. (Not now used in the plural.)

⁷ Argument. *Subject.*

'She who even but now was your best object,
Your praise's *argument*, balm of your age,
Dearest and best.'—*Shakespeare.*

⁸ Plat. *Tim.* iii. 38, seq.

⁹ Fume. *Idle conceit; vain imagination.* 'If his sorrow bring forth amendment, he hath the grace of hope, though it be clouded over with a melancholy fume.'—*Hammond.*

¹⁰ Gross. *On the whole.* 'The confession of our sins to God may be general, when we only confess in *gross* that we are sinful; or particular, when we mention the several sorts and acts of our sins.'—*Duty of Man.*

power and effect over the gross¹ and mass of things; but they are rather gazed upon, and waited upon² in their journey, than wisely observed in their effects, especially in their respective effects; that is, what kind of comet, for magnitude, colour, version³ of the beams, placing in the region of heaven or lasting, produceth what kind of effects.

There is a toy, which I have heard, and I would not have it given over, but waited upon a little. They say it is observed in the Low Countries (I know not in what part), that every five and thirty years, the same kind and sute⁴ of years and weathers comes about again; as great frosts, great wet, great droughts, warm winters, summers with little heat, and the like; and they call it the prime: it is a thing I do the rather mention, because, computing backwards, I have found some concurrence.

But to leave these points of nature, and to come to men. The greatest vicissitude of things amongst men, is the vicissitude of sects and religions; for these orbs rule in men's minds most. The true religion is built upon the rock; the rest are tossed upon the waves of time. To speak, therefore, of the causes of new sects, and to give some counsel concerning them, as far as the weakness of human judgment can give stay⁵ to so great revolutions.

When the religion formerly received is rent by discords, and when the holiness of the professors of religion is decayed and full of scandal, and withal⁶ the times be stupid, ignorant, and barbarous, you may doubt⁷ the springing up of a new sect; if

¹ Gross. *The chief part; the main body.* 'The gross of the people can have no other prospect in changes and revolutions than of public blessings.'—*Addison.*

² Waited upon. *Watched.* See page 238.

³ Version. *Direction.*

⁴ Sute or suit. *Order; correspondence.* 'Touching matters belonging to the Church of Christ, this we conceive that they are not of one sute.'—*Hooker.* For our expression 'out of sorts,' Shakespere has 'out of sutes.'

⁵ Stay. *Check.*

'With prudent stay he long deferred
The fierce contention.'—*Philips.*

⁶ Withal. *Likewise; besides.*

'God, when He gave me strength, to shew withal
How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.'—*Milton.*

⁷ Doubt. *To fear; to apprehend.* 'This is enough for a project without any name. I doubt more than will be reduced into practice.'—*Swift.*

then also there should arise any extravagant and strange spirit to make himself author thereof—all which points held when Mahomet published his law. If a new sect have not two properties, fear it not, for it will not spread: the one is the supplanting, or the opposing of authority established—for nothing is more popular than that; the other is the giving licence to pleasures and a voluptuous life: for as for speculative heresies (such as were in ancient times the Arians, and now the Arminians), though they work mightily upon men's wits, they do not produce any great alteration in States, except it be by the help of civil occasions. There be three manner of plantations of new sects—by the power of signs and miracles; by the eloquence and wisdom of speech and persuasion; and by the sword. For martyrdoms, I reckon them amongst miracles, because they seem to exceed the strength of human nature: and I may do the like of superlative and admirable holiness of life. Surely there is no better way to stop the rising of new sects and schisms than to reform abuses; to compound the smaller differences; to proceed mildly, and not with sanguinary persecutions; and rather to take off the principal authors, by winning and advancing them, than to enrage them by violence and bitterness.

The changes and vicissitudes in wars are many, but chiefly in three things; in the seats or stages of the war, in the weapons, and in the manner of the conduct. Wars, in ancient time, seemed more to move from east to west; for the Persians, Assyrians, Arabians, Tartars (which were the invaders), were all eastern people. It is true the Gauls were western; but we read but of two incursions of theirs—the one to Gallo-Græcia, the other to Rome; but east and west have no certain points of heaven, and no more have the wars, either from the east or west, any certainty of observation; but north and south are fixed; and it hath seldom or never been seen that the far southern people have invaded the northern, but contrariwise¹—whereby it is manifest that the northern track of the world is in nature the more martial region—be it in respect of the stars of that hemisphere, or of the great continents that are upon the north; whereas the south part, for aught that is known, is

¹ Contrariwise. *On the contrary.* See page 102.

almost all sea; or (which is most apparent) of the cold of the northern parts, which is that, which, without aid of discipline, doth make the bodies hardest, and the courage warmest.

Upon the breaking and shivering of a great State and empire, you may be sure to have wars; for great empires, while they stand, do enervate and destroy the forces of the natives which they have subdued, resting upon their own protecting forces; and then when they fail also, all goes to ruin, and they become a prey; so it was in the decay of the Roman empire, and likewise in the empire of *Almaigne*,¹ after Charles the Great, every bird taking a feather, and were not unlike to befall to² Spain, if it should break.

The great accessions and unions of kingdoms do likewise stir up wars; for when a State grows to an over power, it is like a great flood, that will be sure to overflow, as it hath been seen in the States of Rome, Turkey, Spain, and others. Look when the world hath fewest barbarous people, but such as commonly will not marry, or generate, except they know means to live (as it is almost everywhere at this day, except Tartary), there is no danger of inundations of people; but when there be great shoals of people, which go on to populate, without foreseeing means of life and sustentation,³ it is of necessity that once in an age or two they discharge a portion of their people upon other nations, which the ancient northern people were wont to do by lot—casting lots what part should stay at home, and what should seek their fortunes. When a warlike State grows soft and effeminate, they may be sure of a war; for commonly such States are grown rich in the time of their degenerating, and so the prey inviteth, and their decay in valour encourageth a war.

As for the weapons, it hardly falleth under rule and observation; yet we see even they have returns and vicissitudes; for

¹ *Almaigne.* Germany.

‘Then I stoutly won in fight

The Emperour’s daughter of *Almaigne*.’—*Sir Guy of Warwick*.

² Befall to (unusual with to). *To happen*.

‘Some great mischief hath befallen

To that meek man.’—*Milton*.

³ Sustentation. *Support*. ‘He (*Malcolm*) assigned certain rents for the sustentation of the canons he had placed there of St. Augustine.’—*Holinshed*.

certain it is, that ordnance was known in the city of the Oxydraces in India, and was that which the Macedonians called thunder, and lightning, and magic, and it is well known that the use of ordnance hath been in China above two thousand years. The conditions of weapons and their improvements are, first, the fetching¹ afar off, for that outruns the danger, as it is seen in ordnance and muskets; secondly, the strength of the percussion, wherein likewise ordnance do exceed all arietations² and ancient inventions; the third is, the commodious use of them, as that they may serve in all weathers, that the carriage may be light and manageable, and the like.

For the conduct of the war: at the first men rested extremely upon number; they did put the wars likewise upon main force and valour, pointing³ days for pitched fields,⁴ and so trying it out upon an even match, and they were more ignorant in ranging and arraying their battles.⁵ After, they grew to rest upon number rather competent than vast, they grew to advantages of place, cunning diversions, and the like, and they grew more skilful in the ordering of their battles.

In the youth of a State, arms do flourish, in the middle age of a State, learning, and then both of them together for a time; in the declining age of a State, mechanical arts and merchandise. Learning hath his infancy, when it is but beginning, and almost childish; then his youth, when it is luxuriant and juvenile; then his strength of years, when it is solid and reduced;⁶ and, lastly, his⁷ old age, when it waxeth dry and exhaust.⁸ But it is not good to look too long upon these turning wheels of vicissitude, lest we become giddy. As for the philology of them, that is but a circle of tales, and therefore not fit for this writing.

¹ Fetch. *To strike from a distance.*

² Arietation. *The use of battering-rams.*

³ Point. *To appoint.* See page 462.

⁴ Fields. *Battles.*

‘And whilst a *field* should be dispatch’d and fought,
You are disputing of your generals.’—*Shakespere.*

⁵ Battles. *Forces.*

‘What may the king’s whole *battle* reach unto?’—*Shakespere.*

⁶ Reduced. *Subjected* (to rule). ‘The Romans *reduced* Spain, Gaul, and Britain by their arms.’—*Ogilvie.*

⁷ His. *Its.* See page 421.

⁸ Exhaust. *Exhausted.* See page 96.

ANNOTATION.

' Speculative Heresies, such as the Arminians.'

Bacon very coolly sets down the Arminians as Heretics, though never so pronounced by our Church. But they were cruelly persecuted by fellow-Protestants in Holland; and their tenets probably misrepresented; as they are by some at this day. And hence probably he took for granted without inquiry that they must have taught something very shocking.

A FRAGMENT OF AN ESSAY ON FAME.

THE poets make Fame a monster ; they describe her in part finely and elegantly, and in part gravely and sententiously ; they say, look, how many feathers she hath, so many eyes she hath underneath, so many tongues, so many voices, she pricks up so many ears.

This is a flourish : there follow excellent parables ; as that she gathereth strength in going : that she goeth upon the ground, and yet hideth her head in the clouds ; that in the day-time she sitteth in a watch-tower, and flieth most by night ; that she mingleth things done with things not done ; and that she is a terror to great cities : but that which passeth all the rest is, they do recount that the earth, mother of the giants that made war against Jupiter, and were by him destroyed, thereupon in anger brought forth Fame ; for certain it is that rebels, figured by the giants, and seditious fames¹ and libels, are but brothers and sisters, masculine and feminine. But now if a man can tame this monster, and bring her to feed at the hand, and govern her, and with her fly² other ravening³ fowl and kill them, it is somewhat worth. But we are infected with the style of the poets. To speak now in a sad⁴ and serious manner, there is not in all the politics a place less handled, and more worthy to be handled, than this of fame ; we will therefore speak of these points ; what are false fames, and what are true fames, and how they may be best discerned,⁵ how fames may be sown and raised, how they may be spread and multiplied, and how they may be checked and laid dead, and other

¹ Fames. *Reports ; rumours.* See page 151.

² Fly. *To fly at ; to attack.*

'Fly everything you see, and censure it freely.'—Ben Jonson.

³ Ravening. *Predatory ; rapacious.* *'As a ravening and roaring lion.'*—Ps. xxii. 13.

⁴ Sad. *Grave.*

*'A sad, wise valour is the brave complexion
That leads the van.'*—Herbert.

⁵ Discerned. *Distinguished.* *'Then shalt thou return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.'*—Mal. iii. 18.

things concerning the nature of fame. Fame is of that force, as¹ there is scarcely any great action wherein it hath not a great part, especially in the war. Mucianus undid² Vitellius by a fame that he scattered, that Vitellius had in purpose to move the legions of Syria into Germany, and the legions of Germany into Syria; whereupon the legions of Syria were infinitely inflamed.³ Julius Cæsar took Pompey unprovided, and laid asleep his industry and preparations by a fame that he cunningly gave out, how Cæsar's own soldiers loved him not; and being wearied with the wars, and laden with the spoils of Gaul, would forsake him as soon as he came into Italy.⁴ Livia settled all things for the succession of her son Tiberius, by continually giving out that her husband Augustus was upon recovery and amendment;⁵ and it is a usual thing with the bashaws to conceal the death of the great Turk from the janizaries and men of war, to save the sacking of Constantinople, and other towns, as their manner is. Themistocles made Xerxes, King of Persia, post apace⁶ out of Grecia,⁷ by giving out that the Grecians had a purpose to break his bridge of ships which he had made athwart⁸ the Hellespont.⁹ There be a thousand such like examples, and the more they are, the less they need to be repeated, because a man meeteth with them everywhere; wherefore, let all wise governors have as great a watch and care over fames, as they have of the actions and designs themselves.

¹ As. *That.* See page 26.

² Undid. *Ruined.* (Not so frequently used in this sense as are the other tenses of the verb 'to undo.')

'Where, with like haste, through several ways they run,
Some to *undo*, and some to be *undone*.'—*Denham.*

³ Tacit. *Hist.* ii. 80.

⁴ Cæs. *de Bell. Civ.* i. 6.

⁵ Tacit. *Ann.* i. 5.

⁶ Apace. *Speedily.*

'Ay, quoth my uncle Glo'ster,
Small herbs have grace, great weeds do grow *apace*;
And since, methinks, I would not grow so fast,
Because sweet flowers are slow, and weeds make haste.'—*Shakespere.*

⁷ Grecia. *Greece.* 'Through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of *Grecia*.'—*Dan.* xi. 2.

⁸ Athwart. *Across.*

'Execrable Shape!
That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miscreated front *athwart* my way.'—*Milton.*

⁹ Vid. *Herod.* viii. 108, 109.

ANNOTATIONS.

[This Essay is reckoned a fragment, as it is supposed Bacon must have written much more on the subject: but it is complete as far as it goes; and there are many of the other Essays that would have borne to be much enlarged.]

‘Fame is of that force as there is scarcely any great action wherein it hath not a great part, as . . . a man meeteth with them everywhere.’

By ‘fame,’ Bacon means what we call ‘report,’ or ‘rumour,’ or the French *on dit*.

One remarkable instance of the effects produced by rumours might be added to those Bacon mentions. When Buonaparte’s return from Elba was plotted, his partisans went all about France, pretending to seek to purchase land; and when in treaty for a field, and seemingly about to close the bargain, they inquired about the *title*; and when they found, as they generally did, that it was land which had been *confiscated at the Revolution*, they broke off at once, declaring that the title was insecure: thus spreading throughout France the notion that the Bourbons meditated the resumption of all those lands—the chief part of France—to restore them to the former owners. And thus, most of the proprietors were eager for their downfall.

Some remarks on political predictions, already made in my notes on the Essay ‘Of Prophecies,’ might come in under this head.

‘Let all wise governors have as great a watch and care over fames as they have of the actions and designs themselves.’

The necessity of this watchfulness from the effects produced by them seems to have been recognised at a very early period in our legislative history. We have before noticed a statute respecting them made in the reign of Edward the First. It enacts that ‘forasmuch as there have been oftentimes found in the country Devisors of Tales, whereby discord [or occasion] of discord hath arisen many times between the King and his people, or great men of this realm; for the damage that hath

and may thereof ensue ; it is commanded, that from henceforth none be so hardy to tell or publish any false news or tales, whereby discord, or [matter] of discord or slander may grow between the King and his people, or the great men of the realm ; and he that doth so shall be taken and kept in prison, until he hath brought him into the Court which was the first which did speak the same.'—3 *Edw. I. Stat. Westmonast.* 1, c. xxxiv.

The framing and circulating of 'politic fames' might have been set down by Bacon as one of the points of cunning.

THE PRAISE OF KNOWLEDGE.

SILENCE were the best celebration of that which I mean to commend ; for who would not use silence, where silence is not made ? and what crier can make silence in such a noise and tumult of vain and popular opinions ? My praise shall be dedicated to the mind itself. The mind is the man, and the knowledge of the mind. A man is but what he knoweth. The mind itself is but an accident to knowledge, for knowledge is a double of that which is. The truth of being, and the truth of knowing, is all one ; and the pleasures of the affections greater than the pleasures of the senses. And are not the pleasures of the intellect greater than the pleasures of the affections ? Is it not a true and only natural pleasure, whereof there is no satiety ? Is it not knowledge that doth alone clear the mind of all perturbations ? How many things are there which we imagine not ! How many things do we esteem and value otherwise than they are ! This ill-proportioned estimation, these vain imaginations, these be the clouds of error that turn into the storms of perturbation. Is there any such happiness as for a man's mind to be raised above the confusion of things, where he may have the prospect of the order of nature, and the error of men ? Is this but a vein only of delight, and not of discovery ?—of contentment and not of benefit ? Shall we not as well discern the riches of nature's warehouse as the benefit of her shop ? Is truth ever barren ? Shall we not be able thereby to produce worthy effects, and to endow the life of man with infinite commodities ? But shall I make this garland to be put upon a wrong head ? Would anybody believe me if I should verify this, upon the knowledge that is now in use ? Are we the richer by one poor invention, by reason of all the learning that hath been these many hundred years ? The industry of artificers maketh some small improvement of things invented ; and chance sometimes, in experimenting,¹ maketh us to stumble upon some-

¹ Experimenting. *To make experiments.* 'Francisco Redi, by *experimenting* found that . . . '—Ray.

what which is new ; but all the disputation of the learned never brought to light one effect of nature before unknown. When things are known and found out, then they can descant upon them, they can knit them into certain causes, they can reduce them to their principles. If any instance of experience stand against them, they can range it in order by some distinctions. But all this is but a web of the wit ;¹ it can work nothing. I do not doubt but that common notions, which we call reason, and the knitting of them together, which we call logic, are the art of reason and studies. But they rather cast obscurity, than gain light to² the contemplation of nature.

All the philosophy of nature which is now received, is either the philosophy of the Grecians, or that of the alchemists. That of the Grecians hath the foundations in words, in ostentation, in confutation, in sects, in schools, in disputations. The Grecians were, as one of themselves saith, *you Grecians, ever children*.³ They knew little antiquity ; they knew, except fables, not much above five hundred years before themselves. They knew but a small portion of the world. That of the alchemists hath the foundation in imposture, in auricular traditions and obscurity. It was catching hold of religion, but the principle of it is, *Populus vult decipi*.⁴ So that I know no great difference between these great philosophers, but that the one is a loud crying folly, and the other is a whispering folly. The one is gathered out of a few vulgar observations, and the other out of a few experiments of a furnace. The one never faileth to multiply words, and the other ever faileth to multiply gold. Who would not smile at Aristotle, when he admireth the eternity and invariableness of the heavens, as there were not the like in the bowels of the earth ? Those be the confines and borders of these two kingdoms, where the continual alteration and incursion are. The superficies and upper parts of the earth are full of varieties. The superficies and lower parts of the heavens, which we call the middle region of the air, are full of variety. There is much spirit in the one part that cannot be brought into mass. There is much massy body in the other

¹ Wit. *Intellect*. 'Will puts in practice what the wit deviseth.'—*Davies*.

² To. *For*. See page 261.

³ Plato. See *Advancement of Learning*, book i.

⁴ *The people wish to be deceived*.

place that cannot be refined to spirit. The common air is as the waste ground between the borders. Who would not smile at the astronomers, I mean not these few carmen which drive the earth about,¹ but the ancient astronomers, which feign the moon to be the swiftest of the planets in motion, and the rest in order, the higher the slower; and so are compelled to imagine a double motion; whereas how evident is it, that that which they call a contrary motion, is but an abatement of motion? The fixed stars overgo² Saturn, and so in them and the rest, all is but one motion, and the nearer the earth the slower—a motion also whereof air and water do participate, though much interrupted.

But why do I in a conference of pleasure enter into these great matters, in sort³ that pretending to know much, I should forget what is seasonable? Pardon me, it was because all things may be endowed and adorned with speeches, but knowledge itself is more beautiful than any apparel of words that can be put upon it. And let not me seem arrogant without respect to these great reputed authors. Let me so give every man his due, as I give time his due, which is to discover truth. Many of these men had greater wits, far above mine own, and so are many in the universities of Europe at this day. But, alas! they learn nothing there but to believe; first to believe that others know that which they know not; and after, themselves know that which they know not. But, indeed, facility to believe, impatience to doubt, temerity to answer, glory to know, doubt to contradict, end to gain, sloth to search, seeking things in words, resting in part of nature; these, and the like, have been the things which have forbidden the happy match between the mind of Man and the nature of things, and in place thereof have married it to vain

¹ Probably a sneer at Copernicus. His disparagement of him, I have alluded to in the preface.

² Overgo. *To pass over.*

‘How many weary steps
Of many weary miles you have o’ergone,
Are numbered in the travel of one mile.’—*Shakespeare.*

³ In sort. *In such a manner.* ‘Flowers worn in such sort can neither be seen well, nor smelt by those that wear them.’—*Hooker.*

‘Let’s on our way in silent sort.’—*Shakespeare.*

notions and blind experiments; and what the posterity and issue of so honourable a match may be, it is not hard to consider.

Printing, a gross¹ invention; artillery, a thing that lay not far out of the way; the needle, a thing partly known before: what a change have these three made in the world in these times; the one in state of learning, the other in state of the war, the third in the state of treasure, commodities, and navigation! And those, I say, were but stumbled upon and lighted upon by chance. Therefore, no doubt, the sovereignty of Man lieth hid in knowledge; wherein many things are reserved, which kings with their treasure cannot buy, nor with their force command; their spials² and intelligencers can give no news of them, their seamen and discoverers cannot sail where they grow; now we govern nature in opinions, but we are thrall³ unto her in necessity; but if we would be led by her in invention, we should command her in action.

ANTITHETA.

PRO.

‘Ea demum voluptas est secundum naturam, cujus non est satietas.

‘The only pleasure which can be conformable to nature is that which knows no satiety.’

* * * *

‘Omnes affectus pravi, falsæ estimationes sunt; atque eadem sunt bonitas et veritas.

‘Bad tendencies are, in fact, false judgments of things; for truth and goodness are the same.’

CONTRA.

‘Contemplatio, speciosa inertia.

‘Contemplation is a specious indolence.’

‘Bene cogitare, non multo melius est, quam bene somniare.

‘Thinking well is not very different from dreaming well.’

¹ Gross. Probably palpably obvious; which it was (as has been above remarked) as soon as a cheap paper was invented.

² Spials. Scouts.

‘For he by faithful spials was assured
That Egypt’s king was forward on his way.’—Fairfax.

³ Thrall. Slave.

‘No thralls like them that inward bondage have.’

ANNOTATION.

No better annotation can be given than in Bacon's own words,—‘The mistaking or misplacing of the last or farthest end of knowledge, is the greatest error of all the rest : For, men have entered into a desire of learning and knowledge, sometimes upon a natural curiosity, and inquisitive appetite ; sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight ; sometimes for ornament and reputation ; and sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction ; and most times for lucre and profession ;—but seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of reason, to the benefit and use of men : As if there were sought in knowledge, a couch whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit ; or a terras for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect ; or a tower of state for a proud mind to raise itself upon ; or a fort or commanding ground for strife and contention ; or a shop for profit or sale ;—and not a rich store-house for the glory of the Creator, and the relief of man's estate.’¹

¹ *Advancement of Learning.*

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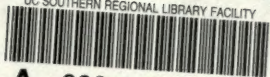
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